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THE LIFE

OF

CHARLES JAMES MATHEWS.

CHARLES JAMES MATHEWS, ÆTAT 75.

from the last Photograph taken by

CHARLES WATKINS.

THE LIFE

OF

CHARLES JAMES MATHEWS

228

CHIEFLY AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL

WITH

SELECTIONS FROM HIS CORRESPONDENCE AND SPEECHES

EDITED BY

CHARLES DICKENS

44c43

In Two Volumes

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PREFACE.

In preparing for the press the autobiographical chapters which were left by the late Charles Mathews, and in selecting from among the very large mass of his papers and letters such documents as I thought would best illustrate his life, I have kept one object steadily in view. It has been my endeavour throughout to discover, from the indications left by himself, on what lines he would probably have constructed the work had he lived to complete it, and especially, where it was at all possible, to allow him to tell his own story, in his own way, and in his own words. With but very few exceptions every letter or paper included or quoted in these volumes was found in the box marked "Materials for the book," which was entrusted to my care by Charles Mathews's family after his death.

CHARLES DICKENS.

May, 1879.

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"THE LITTLE PARSON."—From the Original Drawing by DE WILDE, in the possession of J. L. TOOLE, Esq.

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THE LIFE

OF

CHARLES JAMES MATHEWS.

CHAPTER I.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

AN APOLOGY FOR THE LIFE OF CHARLES JAMES MATHEWS. 1803–1819.

GIBBON, the historian, was said to have had no nose at all, only an apology for one, and Cibber calls his autobiography, in the same sense, an "Apology" for his life, not deeming the work sufficiently complete to bear its more extended meaning. But it is not with this signification that I offer an apology for mine: I give it in its literal and simple acceptation, for, if ever any man's life needed an apology, mine is the one. I have flown in the face of the world and its prejudices—have followed my own course through good and evil in my own way—have set at defiance what are generally denominated the laws of propriety—and have forfeited all claim to what is called by the world respectability. I have been put down for a reckless,

extravagant, devil-may-care fellow, without principle or feeling; and though I have been fortunate enough to retain popularity through all my difficulties, and in spite of these universally believed failings, I cannot shut my eyes to the conviction that I have merely enjoyed the same sort of sympathy with that granted to the scapegrace Charles Surface, and that amusement at my audacity has been in great measure the secret of the constant support and indulgence I have been favoured with. Now, I have a much better opinion of myself than the world at large entertains, and I am bold enough—or perhaps vain enough—to think that when I have told my own story, and have laid bare all the various motives and moving accidents that have swayed me in my career, it will be found I have not been such a bad fellow after all; and though a total disregard of the opinion of the world has certainly pervaded every action of my life, that disregard has only extended to what I chose to consider prejudices of society, and has never proceeded from callousness as to conduct resulting from want of honour or feeling. That I have laughed, and still laugh, at the poor, timid, conventional notions of a large portion of my fellow-men I confess, but I have the highest respect for all that is really good and worthy of admiration, and never have I for a moment lost sight of what I have considered essential to the position of a gentleman. It will be found, perhaps, as we proceed, that my notions on this

subject are peculiar, and probably will not be accepted by the world. This I can't help; but at any rate, in duty to myself, I am anxious to state my case plainly, and have my character, such as it is, clearly understood. I have grinned through all my trials, and have allowed no one to witness those moments of depression and agony that I have suffered in private. With a light heart, a good digestion, a cheerful mind, excellent health, and an independent spirit, I have been able to cope with all the small ills of life that are so often magnified into irretrievable misfortunes, and preserve my equilibrium in the midst of the many social earthquakes, which, had I been a "serious man," and "highly respectable," would most probably have driven me to despair.

Before arranging my materials in a sufficiently condensed form to meet the public eye, I now begin the more formidable task of committing to paper all and everything my memory furnishes me with—every detail of my life, as though it were the life of someone else, assisted by printed extracts, and illustrated by correspondence, so as to furnish a store from which to select what may be considered by others worthy of ultimate adoption. In short, I shall first collect my facts, and register my observations for myself, before attempting to make them worthy of presenting to others.

Oh that I had had the time and patience to keep a diary! What a world of trouble it would have saved me, and what endless odd details and incidents, now

forgotten, I should have been able to record! Harley kept one for some forty years. I have seen three volumes, all regularly bound and lettered. They contain a most interesting account of what he had for dinner each day, and what he paid for coach-hire, and not a word of anything else. I doubt whether their publication would interest the public of the present day. I find that I, too, commenced a journal regularly on the first of January every year, and invariably broke down after a few weeks, then resumed, and finally dropped it altogether. My intentions were good but my perseverance faulty.

My mother was a careful preserver of letters and hoarder of documents, and not a line I ever wrote to her, or a scrap of criticism referring to me, has been destroyed. I, in my turn, stored away hundreds of hers, and have, therefore, an overwhelming collection of dates and memoranda to select from. Indeed, I much regret that I cannot publish her letters in full, for they are in many respects admirable, some of them I may say models in their way. I was always my mother's boy, and her life was devoted to my moral and intellectual cultivation. She was a great reader, and made extracts from every book she read. Some fifty or sixty quarto volumes of manuscript attest her taste and industry. She was sincerely religious, but with the most cheerful mind; alive to humour, and was ready to join in any harmless amusement that offered, and I was

most fortunate in possessing at all times a delightful companion as well as a tenderly affectionate parent.

The first chapter of a book is frequently a matter of some difficulty, and various are the ways adopted to interest the reader at starting. Luckily, this does not apply to the first chapter of an autobiography, and I have no hesitation in deciding on the proper commencement of my work. I boldly begin with the most important, if not the most interesting, incident of my life, viz. my birth. I can't have a better beginning than that. No man can have a better beginning than that. It is the most innocent transaction I was ever mixed up with; and though, had it never taken place, it would have saved a good deal of worry and trouble to myself and others, I feel that it is, perhaps, the only thing that I can remember which really needs no apology.

I was born on the 26th of December, 1803—on what is vulgarly called "Boxing Night." I came into the world with the pantomimes, in a laughing season, and my first cry, if it could have been understood, was, I have no doubt: "Here we are!" The spot selected for my first appearance was a nice little house, in a nice little street, in Liverpool, contiguous to the theatre where my father and mother were at that time fulfilling their first provincial engagement after their first season in London. It was called then, as now, Basnett Street. But how has that nice little

house in that nice little street degenerated! I have watched it for years. I have seen it turned into a shop—a grocer's—with a large gold teapot for a sign; into a shoemaker's, with Noah's ark for a symbol, though what shoemakers can have to do with Noah's ark, the last place where shoes could possibly be wanted, I never could conceive. I have seen it a registry office for servants, a potato store, a lawyer's office, a toy shop, a milliner's, and it has undergone twenty other metamorphoses, all equally fatal to its romance.

As soon as my wishes could be clearly ascertained, which I endeavoured to make known by curiously-varied fits of squalling, indicative of the disgust I felt at the ignominious locality forced upon me for my birth, I was conveyed to York, which should, in fact, have been my native place, if common justice had been done me; and there the interesting ceremony of my christening took place, at St. Helen's Church, where, in the month of March previously, my father and mother had been married. This was my first gala day in life, and I have been informed that I was in high spirits upon the occasion. How often, in after years, have I looked from the windows of Harker's Hotel upon the picturesque little church in front of it, and while sipping my wine, gazed upon the spot where I took my first taste of water!

It seems that I had two narrow escapes at this early period of my existence. On the very night I was born the play of "Paul and Virginia" was to have been acted

at the Liverpool Theatre, in which piece my mother was to have played Virginia, and the idea was seriously entertained of giving me the name of Paul in honour of the occasion. I am truly grateful to have escaped this infliction. The name of William was next almost decided on, in remembrance of my father's favourite brother, who had recently died at Barbadoes; but luckily that never-to-be-sufficiently-thanked Methodist preacher, my dear old grandfather, prevented my having the horrid abbreviation of "Billy" attached to me for life; and, in obedience to his wish that I should bear either his own name or that of my father, it was resolved to give me the advantage of both, and I was christened "Charles James" accordingly. It appears that, in addition to my grandfather's name, his profession was also to be given to me, and I was "promised to the Church." The good old gentleman, however, pleased as he was at the idea, very properly stipulated that I should not be forced to enter upon such a profession unwillingly, and his saying with reference to it has been often repeated to me: "Remember," said he, "that a man may be a good man without being a clergyman, but to force him to be a clergyman might tend to make him a bad man," which I think a very liberal speech for a Methodist parson.

These highly important details will, no doubt, be read with the keenest interest; and as my personal appearance at the earliest age is a matter of equal

importance, I cannot do better than give the following letter from my friend Richard Lane on the subject:

"Nov. 19, 1860.

"My dear Charlie,

"We had a delightful chat with your mother about you last night. The enclosed may not be new to you, but it is well worth your notice, if only to introduce Charles Young. She amused us immensely by her manner of telling it. She knows nothing of my sending it. I dictated it to Emily while at work to-day, and I think it is as nearly as possible verbatim.

"'What a peculiar nose Charles Young had! As we were very intimate with him, even before Charles was born, I was constantly jesting with him about the said nose. When an interesting prospect was open to me, he said one day: "Take care! I warn you, if you set your mind on this nose of mine, that baby will be born with a hook." His habit was to ask at the door: "How's Narny?" as the expected time drew near. When Charles arrived (although it was not before he was due) he was the very smallest and funniest little thing that was ever seen; rarely smiled from the first, and seemed perfectly easy and self-possessed. I had been told to prepare for a very minute baby (appearances not giving warrant to any great expectation), and the clothes were therefore far below the average size, but they were so ridiculously large, that they hung upon him like a sack;

he was therefore wrapped in wadding, and put into a basket by the fire, while his first outfit was prepared by cutting up one of his father's soft white neckcloths, which was tacked together, and snipped at the edges in imitation of ruffles. There he lay on his back in perfect comfort, with both his tiny hands lifted up as high as he could, the fingers incessantly wriggling as they peeped out of the frilled cuffs.

"'When Miss Grimani (who was then the fiancée and afterwards the wife of Charles Young) saw the baby, she remarked upon his ridiculous knowing little face, and he looked from one to the other as if he would say: "I'm quite comfortable; I don't see what there is to laugh at. I believe I was expected. I am not a seven months' child, or anything of that sort; you'll find me quite perfect and satisfactory; only leave me alone, I want to go to sleep."

"'All this time the immediate object of amusement was *the nose*. There, exactly in the right place, was the most absurd little protuberance, not bigger than a good-sized pea, and certainly not deserving the name of nose. Miss Grimani remarked upon this, and when I told her there was a good story upon that subject, she left me in great delight to play a trick upon Charles Young. In reply to his question: "How's Nanny?" she gravely said: "She is going on very well, but she has the most ridiculous little baby, and, only fancy, with a Roman nose!" "Don't tell me so!" roared out Young, who went into

fits of laughter, danced round the room, and told Miss Grimani of the warnings he had given the mother; said he should insist upon seeing it, and that he would kill it, or eat it, or do something desperate. When he was allowed, after much preparation, to see the child, and discovered the hoax that had been played upon him, he made such a noise in the room that he was turned out bodily by the nurse.

"'Now, the fact is, that Master Charles did not develop a nose to speak of until he was five years old.'"

In the spring of the following year my father returned to London, having accepted a renewed engagement for himself and wife for three summer seasons, with Colman at the Haymarket—the "little Haymarket," as it was always lovingly called—and for five winter seasons at Drury Lane, then under the management of Richard Brinsley Sheridan, and in a short time my education began to assume colossal proportions at Colney Hatch, where they then lived, and I "eat my terms," as it is classically denominated—that is, learnt my A B C by the ingenious means of gingerbread letters, which I was allowed to devour on correctly naming them, and thus I was tempted literally to "read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest."

My father's nickname in his early days had been, in allusion to his very thin figure, "Stick"—rather an ominous appellation for an actor—I was therefore, as

a natural consequence, dubbed "Twig;" and as the cottage had been taken mainly for my health, it was honoured by the distinguished title of Twig Hall. It was a mere nutshell, nothing more—a real "cottage," not a "cottage of gentility," pronounced, upon the authority of the poet, to have been so dear to the devil, whose favourite vice was "pride, that apes humility"—but a little rural snuggery, and became the resort of many witty and accomplished people, who there threw off their town manners, and gave way to the merriness of their hearts. Of course I was too young to enjoy their wit, but I appreciated their gaiety; and who knows how much this early association with pleasant people may have helped to give a cheerful tone to the rest of my existence? It has been said that "just as the twig is bent the tree's inclined," and I certainly must have got a twist or two, here at starting, likely to influence the direction of my subsequent growth. With George Colman, Theodore Hook, James and Horace Smith—the authors of the "Rejected Addresses"—Dubois, Liston, Charles Young, Charles Kemble, the beautiful and accomplished Harriet Mellon, afterwards Duchess of St. Albans, and many other such celebrities of the day for playmates, it would have been a marvel if I had not been a little tinged with the colour of their minds, and led by their example to take a joyous view of life.

Besides the familiar sobriquet of "Twig," I was

almost as generally spoken of as the "little parson," and, as an appropriate birthday offering, one of our waggish friends presented to me a complete little parson's suit of black—old-fashioned square-cut coat, long flapped waistcoat, knee-breeches, worsted stockings, shoes, and buckles, white bands, &c.—attired in which I was lifted on the dining-table to drink the healths of the "tompany." The drawing of me in my clerical costume by Dewilde bears the date of June, 1807, which would make my age at that time just three years and a half, which I fancy may be safely taken as my earliest appearance in character.

In due time I rose to the dignity of a preparatory school, and at six years of age I was entered at Miss Swalwell's "Juvenile Academy" at Hackney, where, according to the Christmas account now before me for the first three-quarters' "board and tuition," ending December 25, 1810, I appear to have been already qualifying for an Admirable Crichton—music, dancing, fencing, broadsword, French, writing, military exercises, gun ("pop," I presume, accidentally omitted) being included among the various items.

An examination of this account of Miss Swalwell's throws an interesting light upon my position at that period.

My health appears to have been good; only 4s. 6d. for "domestic medicine" in three-quarters of a year. I don't know whether a black dose and a whipping are

"THE LITTLE PARSON"
from the original drawing by De Wilde
in the possession of
J.L.TOOLE ESQ.

included in this item. My muscular developments seem to have been satisfactory, 3s. 9d. being charged for "buttons, tape, &c."—no doubt, wrenched off or burst asunder in the course of my athletic sports; while the enormous outlay in "repairs of boots and shoes," speaks well for my personal activity.

My literary tastes cannot be correctly ascertained, seeing that they are clubbed under the general title of "books, 4s.;" though "spelling-book, 1s. 6d." and "testament, 2s.," are distinctly set forth as probable guarantees for the respectability of the "Juvenile Academy." "Mrs. Barbauld's hymns, 1s. 6d.," was, perhaps, a pardonable weakness, and "seat at chapel, 4s. 6d.," an amiable extravagance; but 1s. per quarter for "public charity," I must always think an uncalled-for ostentation, especially as it was put down in the bill, and not paid for by myself. My "private charity" is not alluded to, being of course, and very properly, only known to myself; but I trust I parted with my occasional halfpenny, when distressing circumstances required it, with becoming alacrity and satisfaction.

A gratifying assurance that early intemperance was not among my many failings, is gathered from the charge of "wine, 4s. 6d.," for a period of nine months. And even that indulgence was atoned for, by a similar sum having been expended upon "seat at chapel." But, I regret to say, there is one awkward fact which cannot be got over or excused; 5s. 4d. is charged for "broken

windows," which, though confirming the impression that I was the fortunate possessor of good health and buoyant spirits, was an early sign of imprudence and want of caution in money matters, seeing that my income, at that time, was limited to threepence per week pocket-money, and I had no right to indulge in luxuries without reasonable hope of paying for them.

On my accession to the honours of the "Juvenile Academy," Twig Hall was given up, and another cottage, but one of more pretension, was purchased from General Bradshaw at Fulham, and as Hackney was found an inconvenient distance for the continuance of my scholastic duties, I was transferred to Miss Batsford's "Seminary," close to our new home.

Nothing particularly remarkable occurred during my period of probation at Miss Batsford's. Oh yes! one little incident I have never forgotten.

Some tender-hearted mother called at the school one day, and left a message that, as her son—some miscreant in petticoats—had grossly misconducted himself while at home on the previous Sunday afternoon, she desired he might be severely whipped at an early hour on the Monday morning. As no name was left, and I had been home on the day before, the conclusion was arrived at that I had been "too lively," and I had to endure the indignity of the birch rod in expiation.

Had I been a Byron, I might have brooded over the disgrace for ever, and another "Childe Harold" might

have been the result; but I was not so; I only cried till I was tired, and pocketed the affront. The error was soon discovered, and I became doubly endeared to all around me from the accident.

Accompanying my father and mother to Major Scott Waring's, at Peterborough House, shortly after, I met, for the first time, the Duke of Sussex, whose heart I won by suddenly calling out, with childish naïveté: "Oh ma! look at that fat duke! How funnily he shuffles his cards!"

The story of my woes was related to him, and he never forgot it to his dying day. No matter when or where I had the honour of meeting him in after years, he never failed to call out, good-humouredly: "Well, Charles, have you been whipped lately?—What?"

In course of time I was removed to Merchant Taylors' School, in the City of London, where my father had been educated before me. This was the first real event of my life.

Through the influence of my father's friend Sir John Silvester, then Recorder, I was placed on the foundation, and was received as a boarder into the family of the Rev. Mr. Cherry, the head-master.

In obedience to the promise made at my christening, I was destined for a clergyman, and, as the initiatory step towards that profession, became a fag—cleaned three or four pairs of boots every morning, washed the

tea-things, and did duty as warming-pan to my young master, by lying in his bed on cold nights till he required it, and then being turned into my own.

Here Latin, Greek, and Hebrew were daily administered in large doses, while my native English was left to be picked up as best it might in the cloisters, which formed our playground, and in the streets of the City; where, between school hours, I might now have been seen wandering, without my hat, like the little ragamuffin I was, or running up Suffolk Lane on a dark night, in my bedgown, to buy candles, in my capacity of fag, after having been lowered from the bedroom window in a sheet, to the delight of the little tyrant, my master.

One bright light illumined this dark epoch. Alderman Scholey, the newly-elected Lord Mayor, having been a Merchant Taylors' boy, invited the whole school to a banquet at the Mansion House—a public breakfast, where we all, with clean faces, and in our Sunday clothes, did him the honour to repair.

A letter of mine has survived, which gives a graphic description of the occasion, and shows that I at least, for one, did due honour to the good cheer provided.

"My dear Mother,

"I returned home very safe on Sunday night. The dresser took me to school on Sunday night, and I dreamt of going to the Mansion House; and when morning came we all went into school

and said lessons before we went to the Mansion House, and then a monitor and a promptor went at the head of each form, and then we entered. Whe* showed our tickets when we went in, and the Lord Mayor and the Lady Mayoress bowed to us, and then we bowed to him, and he asked us all how we did. I have enclosed the ticket in the letter. The Lord Mayor's son showed us into all the rooms in the Mansion House. We saw the state bed and all the state rooms in the Mansion House, and then we went to breakfast. There where very good things. I eat viz., a bit of fowl, a pear, an apple, half a jelly, a role, five glasses of negus, half a tumbler of ale, and three cups of coffee, and a glass of water.

"I went to see Miss Laforest, and she said she'd heard of my going to the play on Saturday night, and she asked me if you where coming to town. I told her I did not know.

"I remain, your dutiful Son,

"C. MATHEWS."

During the holidays, when at Merchant Taylors', a benefit was announced at Covent Garden Theatre (by whom given I now forget), the great attraction of which was to be a masquerade on the stage, including various amusements of singing and dancing, a balloon ascending to the ceiling, and showering bonbons among the

* The original spelling is preserved.

audience, a supper, and other temptations. Tickets of invitation were sent to Mr., Mrs., and Master Mathews; the latter of course only meant as a joke. But not so did Master Mathews regard it, and in spite of all remonstrances, he not only firmly asserted his right to accept the invitation, but declared his intention of going in character. This was at first merely laughed at, but at last good-humouredly agreed to. The little parson's dress was remembered, and was dragged from its obscurity, patched and lengthened, for it was of course too small; and with the additions of a gold-headed cane, a three-cornered hat, and a powdered wig (the clerical bands being suppressed), I was transformed into a little doctor. I was a great success, bustled about, chattered with everybody, while feeling their pulses, and, being a remarkably diminutive boy of my age, looked like an animated doll to the audience in that large theatre. They roared with laughter, and applauded whenever I appeared. When the curtain descended there was a tumultuous call for "The Doctor! the Doctor!" and, pushed on by the stage manager (albeit nothing loth), I strutted across the stage and kissed my hand to the public with all the airs of an old stager. Elated with my success, I stood at the wing in anticipation of perhaps another call, when one of the carpenters, to my great disgust, lifted me out of the way, as if I had been one of the properties, saying: "There, you're done with, be off!" This to the artist

who had been kissed by dozens of pretty actresses, and applauded to the echo by a discriminating British public! This to the excited over-heated little Doctor, who had been treated continually through the evening by kind but inconsiderate admirers to glass after glass of negus! It was an outrage, but I was the weakest, and had to yield to this Jack-in-office, and made my way to the supper-room. Here I was welcomed by a bevy of beauties—more kisses, more negus. I had the good taste though, young as I was, to prefer the caresses of the beautiful Maria Foote, who must have been perfectly bewitching in her costume of Anne Boleyn, and in her lap I quietly nestled, and soon fell fast asleep.

How often have I since laughed with the amiable Lady Harrington over the remembrance of that evening! The early appreciation of her beauty and sweetness of manner was never weakened during a subsequent intimacy of nearly forty years.

My brilliant success on this memorable occasion was, however, sadly marred, and terminated, I regret to say, ignominiously. Overcome by the kisses or the negus (probably the latter), I was found so hopelessly locked in sleep that I was obliged to be carried home on my father's shoulder, dead beat (a prejudiced policeman might have said "drunk," adding: "What, again! I know you!"), and shot on my bed, an exhausted receiver. Thus ended my first public performance,

the Colney Hatch effort having been only that of an amateur.

Being a delicate boy, my health at length began to break down under the severity of the fagging system, while the amount of classical learning I imbibed was of the slenderest possible kind. The fact is, I was a dunce. There is no disguising the truth; and had I been removed, as in due course I should shortly have been, to St. John's College, Oxford, where, as a foundation boy from Merchant Taylors', I was entitled to a fellowship,* I should inevitably have been plucked, like the goose I represented.

And yet it appears, that by some means or other (certainly not merit), I contrived to scramble up to the fifth form, in spite of the dislike, which it was clear old Cherry, the head-master, had taken to me.

The cause of the dislike was simple enough; I was "too lively" for him, and animal spirits were unpardonable things in his eyes. Of course they were; how could they be otherwise? He weighed sixteen stone, and had never, I fancy, heard a joke in his life. Had he ever been a fag? I should say not. Had he ever been a boy? I don't believe even that. But he had flogged thousands, and looked upon them generally, and me in particular, as his natural enemies. He knew I

* A scholarship or exhibition is probably meant.

ought to be miserable; I had woes enough to make me so, but I was abnormally, provokingly cheerful, and my laugh irritated him. Luckily, I was always wanting whipping, so he was able to work off his ill-humour satisfactorily, without its striking in and endangering his health.*

Fortunately for me, while one day engaged in a game of cock-fighting (human cock-fighting—an allegorical representation of the real sport, which consisted

* As to young Mathews's "liveliness" and animal spirits, a letter written by Major-General Ludlow from Yates Court, Mereworth, Maidstone, may be quoted here:

"Beyond those of my own name at Merchant Taylors' I recall chiefly Charles Mathews, who long sat by my side in the fifth form.

"He had a quiet way of amusing his schoolfellows and preventing them learning their lessons, bringing upon them thereby very painful consequences.

"I remember particularly his mimic portraiture of what he called 'The Battle of the Nile;' which he effected with ships cut out of slips of paper, put facing each other with their keels within the leaves, and at the extreme ends, of a dictionary held crosswise between his knees with the back downwards.

"I am not sure that there was not an artistic arrangement of an open, but rumpled, white pocket handkerchief, to represent *waves*.

"To the prow of each man-of-war was tied a piece of thread, with a loop at the other end to be fixed on a finger, and by means of the loops upon the fingers of the hidden hands respectively, the vessels were made to pass each other in *order of battle*; the which was the (inauspicious) moment for the *guns to open*.

"The 'bang! bang!' too often vociferated by the gratified lookers-on, brought down Dr. Cherry upon the delinquents, whereby their patriotic ardour was probably damped for ever."

of a pitched battle between two boys in the characters of cocks, hopping on one leg with their arms tightly folded, and butting at each other till one was knocked over), I was thrown with such force backwards upon my head against the corner of the solid block which acted as a form in the schoolroom, that I fainted, and was carried to bed. A doctor was sent for, who bound up my bleeding caput, and for some days I lay in a critical position—not in the least anxious for a too speedy recovery, as I soon gathered that a flogging was to be the reward of my outrageous levity.

As I have said, this was a fortunate incident for me, as it led to a good result, for my mother happening to call at this moment (mothers always *do* come at the right moment), an angry colloquy took place, and plain speaking was adopted on both sides.

I gather this from the fragment of a letter I have found from my father to Mr. Cherry on the occasion. The beginning, which is lost, was, I presume, in answer to the charges brought against my ability and industry, although I had been elevated to the fifth form, and proceeds thus :

"There must be some rottenness in the state. In the good old days of Mr. Bishop, I can assert, at all events, and will aver, fearless of contradiction, that such promotion could not have taken place. No boy would have been admitted into the fifth if not properly

qualified. When that step was proposed, it would have been the time to crush my fond hopes, and not leave it till above a twelvemonth after, and then trust to a chance moment to fall upon me with redoubled force. You have had sufficient time to ascertain his qualifications; and, by the manner in which you eased your mind of a treasured load of complaints, it is evident it must have been the effect of deliberation. It is probable that, but for the accidental visit of Mrs. Mathews, who ought to have been sent for when a medical man was deemed necessary, it might have been six months more before you would have condescended to give me the information. I will not attempt to argue the point with you as to the boy's capacity or incapacity—although I believe you do not deny him the former; whether he be a blockhead or a genius, it is equally my duty to forward his prospects in life, and provide him with education. For the mortification of parents under circumstances like ours, I should imagine you would feel; and I do not think it was amiable in you, sir, after having drawn forth tears from a lady, to persevere in making them flow afresh, rather than endeavour to repress them. The violence you were betrayed into, as I am informed, exceeded all bounds; even an accident was converted into an offence, and the remembrance of forgiven grievances renewed to strengthen your cause—to prejudice a stranger and lacerate a mother's feelings. This, I must ever think, was unnecessarily cruel. A

note of five lines to me would have answered every purpose. It would be next to insanity to attempt an opposition to your power, or to combat your prejudices; from all the evidence I have been able to collect on the subject—and I have taken some pains to obtain it—I must suspect that your personal dislike to the boy is rooted. He is, therefore, from this moment, removed from your sight. I shall never allow him to return. You are gratified; I am disappointed—indeed woefully disappointed. You are relieved from an object that, while he dishonours himself, must necessarily attach some reflection upon you to whose care he was confided, and I am burthened with new anxieties. I truly hope, sir, for your own sake, that you may feel as satisfied with your having performed your duty, in endeavouring to disgrace your pupil and endanger his future prospects in life, as I do that I am performing mine in removing him from the care of one who seems so little disposed to treat with indulgence the follies of childhood."

Thus ended for a time my father's views respecting me. He began to suspect that I was of too volatile a nature to render the prospect of a country curacy a desideratum, and unwillingly abandoning all idea of living to see me a dignitary of the Church, at once transplanted me to a private school at Clapham, where, under the affectionate eye of dear Dr. Charles Richardson, the

distinguished lexicographer, and in the company of many boys I knew—especially the sons of Charles Kemble, Charles Young, Liston, and Terry—I found a more congenial soil.

Here I took root at once, and my progress was as delightful to my father as it was surprising to myself.

There was nothing wonderful in this, when the change in my treatment is considered. Instead of being one of a flock of sheep (a black one), I was instantly converted into an object, if not of interest, at any rate of commiseration, and I was probably allowed indulgences that otherwise would not have fallen to my lot. I was received as a parlour boarder, and admitted as one of the family. Dear kind Mrs. Richardson and her simple accomplished daughters made it a second home to me, and I was at once in clover.

Dr. Richardson, too, was more like an affectionate friend than a rigid schoolmaster, and we understood each other in an instant. I was proud of his attention to me, and he was gratified at finding that his endeavours to rescue me from the ignominious future that had been predicted were not thrown away.

He was fond of horse exercise, and I was allowed a pony, and at five o'clock on summers' mornings we used to sally forth together over the Surrey hills, enjoying the early breezes on Wandsworth Common, Sydenham, and Norwood, and getting back at eight to school and

breakfast. The remembrance of these morning rides, always accompanied by cheerful and not uninstructive conversation, is still among the most delightful of my boyish reminiscences, and certainly in no way interfered with my studies; on the contrary, while they improved my health, they gave me fresh zest for the tasks assigned me, and put me in good humour with myself and all around me.

Who shall venture to say that any boy is an incorrigible dunce? Is there any seed that will take root in every soil? Is the fault in the seed? No; it lies in the ignorance of the sower. Find out the proper soil, select the proper aspect, and the seed, which has before shown no signs of fruition, will shoot forth at once, and flower luxuriantly.

Who then shall say that a boy may not be treated in a similar manner? Who knows what uncongenial elements may not surround him, and check his mental growth? Try it, at all events. Place him under other influences, and his mind may expand and blossom cheerfully under the more fostering aspects.

Such, at any rate, was my case. Not physically strong enough to undergo the hardships I had to undergo at Merchant Taylors', placed haphazard among two hundred other boys, without any watchful eye to mark my progress, or any guiding hand to direct me in my studies, no anxious friend to lead me onwards by encouraging words and gentle manners, I broke down,

for want of common sympathy and care. I had no vent for my high spirits, nothing to vary the monotony of fagging but mischief, no cheerful companionship—nothing but the boisterous pleasures which invariably led to, and ended in, the birch rod and the displeasure of my masters.

It is true I boarded in the house of Mr. Cherry, the head-master, but I scarcely ever saw him out of school, and I never remember to have heard his voice, except when in anger; while the lady who conducted his establishment—no doubt an estimable, kind, and just woman in her own circle—never for a moment allowed it to be forgotten that she was the head-master's daughter, and repelled all attempts at familiarity or affection on the part of the children over whom she ruled.

Among the many obligations I owe to Dr. Richardson, one of the deepest is that of first having my eyes opened by him to the real enjoyment of the ancient classics. It is one thing to translate Homer, Virgil, and Horace correctly, but quite another to read and relish them for their own sake. Boys of course get through their daily lessons with more or less pleasure, according to their greater or less capacity, but very few are tempted to take up the authors they have been plodding over all the morning as a painful task, and think them a delightful amusement for their hours of relaxation.

I remember one day in school hours I was clandestinely devouring, under the shadow of my desk-cover, some light satirical work, I think it was "My Pocket-Book," a lively squib of the day by Dubois, in ridicule of Sir John Carr's popular quartos of travel in Ireland, France, Holland, &c. Taken *in flagrante delicto*, I was agreeably surprised at only receiving a slight rebuke from the Doctor, suggesting a postponement of the further reading of the book in hand till a more appropriate moment.

During our early ride next morning he said: "I was glad to find yesterday, though the time was ill-chosen, that you occupied your leisure hours in skimming over works of the kind you were reading, rather than the vapid Minerva Press novels so much in vogue, or the mischievous highly-flavoured tales boys are apt to get hold of. It makes me hope that your taste is of a higher order, and only wants directing, to open to you a new and never-ending field of delight. Has it never struck you that Horace, and Virgil, and Homer were written for something better than affording schoolboys text-books, and that the sole purpose of their authors has not been attained when a certain number of verses per diem have been successfully mastered by unwilling urchins, who are too glad to throw them aside again as hated objects, until forced to resume them as part of their daily penance? You have now mastered the difficulty of putting Greek and Latin into readable English, but

you have not yet looked for your reward. Now is the time to try and discover the beauties of the authors who have caused you so much trouble and labour, to enjoy and appreciate the charms of their versification, their admirable selection of harmonious words and appropriate epithets, the elegant simplicity of their style, and the point and finish with which their ideas are expressed. You have a treat before you you little dream of. Try it, and see whether I am not right. You will tell me in a little time that you have made Horace your companion, and have fed upon the sweetness of Virgil and the grandeur of Homer with a new sense of pleasure and delight. The wishy-washy trash you now swallow will pall upon your appetite, and you will crave more and more for wholesome food. Homer and Virgil will speak for themselves, but to understand Horace you will require much study of the time in which he lived, and of the manners he satirised, both of which are interesting in the highest degree. Come to me when at fault, and I daresay I shall be able to enlighten you as to his meaning, and help you to relish the refinement of his wit."

Dr. Richardson was then engaged on his great English Dictionary, which was to be published in parts in the "Encyclopædia Metropolitana," then just started, and to which Coleridge had contributed an admirable essay on "Method," by way of preface.

A few of the more favoured boys were allowed to

assist in the preparation of the important work. I was one so distinguished, and was thus delightfully introduced to the study of Chaucer, Gower, Spenser, and all the early poets and historians, the honour of whose acquaintance I had previously been denied, and I imbibed a taste for that style of reading which I have never lost; and often among the worries of life, when people have thought that I was closeted with my difficulties, engaged, as perhaps I ought to have been, with the battle of figures, I have taken down the tall folio of Gower, or the huge quarto of "Piers Plowman's Vision," and let the world go on without me.

My father having sold his cottage at Fulham, and being so much away in the provinces, another little rustic abode was taken for my mother, in the neighbourhood of my school, in order to be near me during his long absences, and I passed my Sundays with her.

One lovely summer's afternoon, after church, I had strolled into a field at the back of the cottage, through which, over a stile, led a narrow footpath, much used as a lovers' walk. Lying upon the grass with a book in my hand, I was enjoying the calm repose, when a couple advanced who evidently did not belong to the usual class of "Sunday outers." I at once recognised the handsome Harry Johnston, then the "leading man," as it is technically termed, at Drury Lane, with a pretty young

actress of the name of Burton, whom I had often admired behind the scenes.*

When I say "Burton," I wish it to be distinctly understood that I withhold the real name from motives of extreme delicacy, seeing that the young lady may be still alive (aged, probably, about eighty), and this allusion to her early indiscretion might possibly injure her prospects in life.

Of course I took no notice of them, but continued my reading. Harry Johnston, however, was playfully inclined, and sauntered up to me with a smile upon his handsome face and the young lady on his arm.

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* Young Mathews was very fond of being taken "behind," and one of his experiences in this line at Covent Garden resulted in the following odd letter to Fawcett the actor:

"Honored Sir,

"Last night I went behind the scenes with my Papa, to see Mr. Liston in the character of Moll Flaggon, and held the Book while Mr. Glasinton was away, and I found you guilty of several mistakes, and I mentioned them to my Papa and Mamma, and they said I had better tell you of them, and I thought so too, because next time somebody in the front of the Theatre might have a book too, and find you out, as I did, and then they will hiss you off, which I should be sorry for. You said, 'no, no, no,' when you ought to have said nothing; and you said, 'I suppose,' at the beginning of a sentence, where you ought to have said 'Ah;' and you said, 'I believe,' where there was nothing to say. I only write these few lines that you may remember another time.

"I remain, Sir,

"Your Respectful Servant,

"C. J. Mathews.

"King's Road, July 1st, 1813."

"Well, my little man," said he, in a bantering tone, "what have you got there? Homer, I suppose, or perhaps the Greek Testament? That's a good boy."

"No," said I; "it's only a novel."

"Bad Sunday reading, young gentleman."

"Oh," said I, "one may do worse things than read novels on Sundays."

"That's true, my young friend. I see you are a philosopher. And what's the novel you are so much interested in?"

"It is called the 'Ghost Seer,'" said I.

"Ah ha! And who recommended you such rubbish as that?"

"Lord Byron," said I. "He speaks of it as one of the best works of fiction he ever read."

"So you read Lord Byron too, do you?"

"Oh yes," said I; "don't you?"

"Well, now and then; but never on Sundays. Then I always prefer Dr. Watts."

"That's more than I do."

"No," said he; "you prefer ghost stories. But what would you do if you saw the ghost of your schoolmaster coming across the fields at this moment?"

"Oh, I don't know," said I. "About the same that Miss Burton would do if she saw Mrs. Harry Johnston coming over the stile."

The effect was electrical. They looked at each other for a moment without speaking.

At last the gentleman, trying to appear unembarrassed, said: "So you know me, do you, young man?"

"I didn't say so."

"No," said he, "but you——"

The young lady at this moment, with more discretion than her companion, pulled his arm suddenly, suggesting a retreat without further explanation.

"Good-bye, youngster," said the gentleman laughing; "you don't mind telling me your own name, I suppose."

"Not at all," said I; "I will tell you with pleasure —the next time we meet."

"Come along," said the young lady, with another pull, and away they went, looking very foolish, and no doubt completely puzzled.

It was some time before I happened to encounter him again, when I was formally introduced to him by my father as the "Ghost Seer."

"Ah ha!" said he, "the mystery is solved at last. The young rascal! He gave me a pretty lesson. I have never chaffed a boy since."

My favourite companions were Julian Young and John Kemble, sons of the distinguished tragedians Charles Young and Charles Kemble. Very different were they in character. John Mitchell Kemble was a serious, studious, odd boy, of strong literary proclivities, fond of solitude, and holding but little communion with

the common herd, from whom he stood aloof, and who regarded him with a degree of respect almost amounting to awe. He devoted himself to the study of the early English writers, and became one of the most accomplished Anglo-Saxon scholars of his day, rendering even then essential assistance to Dr. Richardson.

He established a little newspaper, called *The Clapham Chronicle*, a sheet of about six inches square, printed by himself from a diminutive hand-press, and aping the style of the daily journals. I have a file of them still, "edited by John Mitchell Kemble, printer, No. 1, Desk Row."

Through his father's interest he was appointed to succeed him by the Lord Chamberlain, in the office of Licenser of Plays, which post he held till his death.

Julian Young was the very reverse of John Kemble. Full of fun, with great animal spirits and most affectionate disposition, he was beloved by all, and was a striking contrast to the little pedant who patronised him, but shared in none of his sports. Julian has himself published his reminiscences of the time when he distinguished himself as my "horse," and I can conscientiously endorse his account, for his action was grand, his paces splendid, and his mettle remarkable. I only remember one instance of his breaking down. In the ardour of the sport I once applied the lash a little too vigorously, establishing what is technically termed a "raw," when, forgetting his equine character,

he burst into tears, and declared he would be my horse no longer.

He has no doubt long given up this pastime; and I would not dare even to dream now of offering to drive the Rev. Julian Young,* rector of Ilmington, the popular and highly-esteemed clergyman—though I believe he has still "go" enough in him, if so inclined, to distance all competitors on the road, as he unquestionably does in the pulpit.

* The Rev. Julian Young died, while on a visit to his friend Lady Burdett Coutts, on the 3rd of July, 1873.

CHAPTER II.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY—PUGIN'S PUPIL, 1819-1823.

FOUR years passed pleasantly away in this second home, and the time arrived when my future profession was to be decided on.* The matter being referred to me, I soon

* Charles turned out to be quite a pattern pupil at Dr. Richardson's, and that gentleman wrote of him to Mrs. Mathews, on half a sheet of a letter of the boy's to his mother, dated October 26, 1818, in the following eulogistic terms: "I have begged this little scrap of Charles to say a few words, which I think will give an addition to your rural enjoyments. Charles has conducted himself during his stay with me these holidays in so exemplary a manner that I have derived much gratification from his company, and I hope that he has been able to tell you that he has spent his time not disagreeably, considering that school is still school. His improvement continues to proceed in a manner that promises to make him a scholar of such classical attainments, that, if his father should hereafter transform him into a Cantab, he would, I have no doubt, be very honourably ranked. His success with Euclid, though not so great as that of some boys of steadier temperament, is still very encouraging, and his perseverance is more meritorious than if he found less difficulty to encounter. Altogether, you must allow me to add, that I contemplate the present state of your son's education with pride and pleasure." Of this letter Charles makes the following mention in writing to his mother a month later: "Mr. Richardson called me into the study (you may recollect that the study is his tribunal), and told me that

made my choice. From the first I was passionately fond of drawing and mathematics, in which I had now made considerable progress. Architectural subjects especially took my fancy, and—why I can scarcely say—my ambition was to become an architect. I obtained elementary books, and ultimately announced my desire to follow that profession. My father saw no objection, and the matter was settled at once.

Indeed, I think he was greatly pleased at the selection I had made, for he saw his way in a moment.

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he was very much pleased with my behaviour; that the reason why he requested me to leave him room in my letter was more to acquaint you with that than to explain to you about the letters. He then proceeded to tell me, that he hoped I should take as much pains and pleasure in the new books (Cicero, Herodotus, Horace, Xenophon, &c.) which he had given me, as with those he had before given me. Then he dismissed me, leaving me quite at rest. . ." Further on in the same letter, the boy seems to take much the same view of himself as his master had expressed. "My uncle, in his letter to me, said: 'That my uniform behaviour had been described in terms that reflected great credit on my talents.' I don't like talents, 'tis a vile word. . . I think he might have expressed it in other terms, for you must know that my talents (not of silver or gold, but for *larning*) are very few, and (though I say it, who shouldn't say it) I must have acquired all the credit by my industry. Ah! that is a much better word, and better 'suited to the action.'"

The natural gratification of the elder Mathews and his wife is pleasantly shown in the following letters:

MRS. MATHEWS TO CHARLES J. MATHEWS.

"Briton Ferry, November 4, 1818.

"Enclosed, my dearest Charles, you will find a letter addressed to Mr. Richardson, in acknowledgment of his most welcome and kind

Somewhere about the year 1797, when he was a struggling actor on the Welsh circuit, he made the acquaintance of Mr. Nash, the builder, at Swansea, who was a great patron of the theatre, and occasionally indulged in amateur performances himself. I have a playbill in my possession, announcing him as Sir Peter Teazle, and I have heard my father say that he performed it admirably.

John Nash, the humble builder of Swansea, was now the celebrated London architect in the zenith of his

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expression of your good conduct in all respects during my absence, and which you will believe has given me the most heartfelt delight. Next to your moral good I am most anxious for your improvement as a scholar, and this more for your own future comfort and self-satisfaction than from any vanity of my own, in having a *clever son*; your prosperity and respectability through life depending so much upon this great, though secondary advantage, which, when added to honourable feelings and conduct, will constitute some of your most solid happiness, and recommend you to the world in general as a gentleman and desirable companion. . . .

"I shall be happy to hear from you when you feel inclined, but do not *insist* upon a letter if you feel at a loss for something to say. Mr. Richardson has set my mind so at rest, that I shall now enjoy myself here with greater confidence about you than before. Therefore write when you like to do; continue to merit the praise you seem so honourably to have obtained, and assure yourself of making me your happy, as well as your affectionate mother,

"ANNE MATHEWS."

CHARLES MATHEWS TO CHARLES J. MATHEWS.

"Briton Ferry, November 29, 1818.

"MY DEAR CHARLES,

"I have been so hurried and fatigued for the last few days that I have not had any opportunity of conveying to you the expres-

fame, and my father lost no time in calling upon him, to ask his advice as to the best mode of forwarding my architectural aspirations. The recognition was most cordial; and another acquaintance was brought to his recollection by Mr. Nash, in the person of the late Augustus Pugin, who had painted the scenes for the little Welsh theatre of bygone times.

Mr. Pugin was a French gentleman of high family, who, having fought a duel in Paris, which ended fatally, had sought refuge in England, landed on the Welsh coast, and having great talent as an artist, earned his living for the time being by his pencil. Accident

sions of my delight, upon reading Mr. Richardson's panegyric upon you, which your mother sent me to Ireland. I assure you, my dear boy, that words are inadequate to express how much gratification those few lines afforded me, and possessing, as I have every reason to believe you do, a feeling heart, it must be very sweet to you to know that it has been in your power to bestow so much pleasure upon your parents. It has ever been the height of my ambition to bestow upon you the most solid and substantial fortune a father can bequeath a son—I mean a good education. The inclination you have lately evinced to take advantage of the opportunities afforded you have fully repaid me for my anxieties, and compensated in a high degree for the disappointment created by your apparent neglect of them when at Merchant Taylors' School, and the testimony of Mr. Richardson of your late improvement has at once proclaimed the success of my plans for your advancement in life, and affords me the most heartfelt satisfaction. My prime object is to see you comfortably provided for, and I hope your application to your studies will continue to back my exertions for your welfare. May God bless you, and enable you to be a comfort to me and your affectionate mother in our old age, is my constant prayer."

having opened a new and most congenial career to him, and having become a great favourite of and of much use to Mr. Nash, he ultimately accompanied his patron to London, and soon became the founder of a school of his own creation, and one much needed and highly patronised. Water-colour drawing was at that time in its infancy, and architects flew to him to have their plans and elevations put into correct perspective, and surrounded with the well-executed and appropriate landscapes Pugin was so skilful in producing, and he had now been for many years at the head of his profession as an architectural draughtsman.

By Mr. Nash he was recommended as the man of all others required to undertake my instruction. The early friends fraternised, and all went upon wheels. A heavy premium was paid for my initiation, and on the 4th of May, 1819, I was installed in Pugin's office for a period of four years as an articled pupil.

Here I first made the acquaintance of James Hervet D'Egville, now a distinguished Member of the Institute of Water-colour Painters, but then educating, like myself, for an architect. He was the son of another esteemed old friend of my father's, and our acquaintance soon ripened into the strictest fellowship; we became constant companions in and out of the office, studied together, went to Italy together, and for upwards of fifty years, though we have neither of us followed the profession we were intended for, and have branched off in such

opposite directions, we have retained a close and uninterrupted friendship.

Pugin and John Britton, the well-known archæologist, were closely associated, and much rivalry existed between the pupils of the two offices. Britton was then engaged in his splendid publication of "The Cathedrals of England;" and his right-hand man was George Cattermole, who, like ourselves, ultimately burst his trammels, and soon became remarkable by his original genius as a water-colour painter, taking rank among the brightest ornaments of his profession.

I now set to work to begin life in earnest. Every day increased my love for the profession I had adopted. I actually doted on the delightful science of architecture, and pursued the acquirement of it with positive passion. The consequence was, of course, soon apparent. I began to show decided marks of proficiency, and I persevered with all the ardour of a first and not "unfortunate" attachment.

Pugin was a delightful instructor. In business hours strict enough and firm enough to command obedience and respect, at other times he was all gaiety and good humour, making himself quite the companion of his pupils, and joining in all their amusements with the ardour of a boy.*

* The association between Pugin and the young Mathews was an agreeable one to master as well as to pupil. Pugin, writing to Mrs. Mathews in March, 1823, says: "I have a great pleasure to

It was a singular fact that, though he had been domesticated in England for some forty years, and spoke English perfectly, as far as volubility was concerned, his French accent and his French idioms were as marked as if he had only recently arrived. If he talked in his sleep he talked in French, and in computing money he always mentally reduced the pounds and shillings into francs before he could ascertain their exact value.

He was a charming artist, and produced his effects by the most simple means, confining himself literally to the use of the three colours, indigo, light red, and yellow ochre. It would puzzle some of our modern water-colour painters to find themselves thus limited.

My father was a devoted lover of the country, and his tastes were decidedly cottagenous. Hitherto his residences had been simple and unpretending; but now, with larger means, he was tempted into a larger venture, and purchased the lease of a beautiful cottage ornée, as it was called—the real "cottage of gentility"—at Highgate, which was then as much in the country as if it had been a hundred miles from town.

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repeat that my pupil and friend Charles is now making rapid progress in his profession, and I trust will continue to improve. In regard to his pleasing and elegant manners I cannot praise him so much, because it became natural to him, having had all his life so good an example at home." A very direct compliment, for which Pugin's French nature would seem to be responsible.

It was called Ivy Cottage, and was built in the Tudor style, with much architectural pretension, and was one of the earliest and most successful of Robinson's designs. It was situated in the midst of Lord Mansfield's beautiful estate at Caen Wood, and surrounded by lovely walks and drives, diversified by wood and water in every direction.

Here my first essay as an architect was made, and a large gallery for my father's theatrical pictures (now in the Garrick Club) and a small Gothic library were erected, from my designs and under my superintendence.

At seven every morning I mounted my horse, and rode into town to business, and at five returned to dinner, and the two phases of the day were as distinct as they were valuable. The mornings were devoted to professional study, and the evenings passed in the society of the wits and literary celebrities of the time, whom it was my father's happiness always to have around him. I had the advantage of constant intercourse with men whose intellectual powers and social qualities have charmed the world in various guises, almost all of whom, alas! have now passed away.

The old and always welcome guests of former days, who used to give their cheering presence to Twig Hall—Colman, Hook, the Smiths, &c. &c. &c., were still constant in their friendship, reinforced by such illustrious additions as Coleridge the poet, who was

our neighbour and daily visitor, Sir Walter Scott—the great Sir Walter—Lord Byron, Lord Alvanley, Moore, Campbell, Charles Lamb, Leigh Hunt, and a host of artists, authors, actors, and beaux esprits, whose conversation dazzled and whose intelligence elevated.

Is it wonderful that with such enchanting associations my mind should have been somewhat diverted from the object of my studies, and that my pen should have been occasionally in my hand as well as my pencil, or that my future should be lighted up with the glorious reflection of the past?

The time at Pugin's was agreeably varied by constant sketching excursions to York, Oxford, Windsor, Winchester, Lincoln, Cambridge, Salisbury, and other places of pictorial and architectural interest, in search of examples for his popular publication called "Specimens of Gothic Architecture." It was the first work that had been attempted containing measured details for practical purposes, and had a great success.

Then came the "Public Buildings of London," to which I had the honour of contributing many drawings. One of them, a section of St. Paul's, and my most elaborate effort, had my name engraved below it, as an especial distinction, of which I was highly proud. It was the first time I had ever seen my name in print, and I immediately grew an inch taller.

The Pavilion at Brighton was the next very popular undertaking, and was most artistically executed, under

the personal superintendence of George the Fourth, for whose especial pleasure it was designed.

But the crowning happiness had yet to come. Business called Pugin to Paris, where he was engaged to make a series of drawings for publication. This was an event. His pupils all went with him, and there my eyes were opened and my senses awakened to a thousand new pleasures hitherto never dreamt of.

The days were occupied with work, making the drawings which formed the principal objects of our study, and the evenings in visiting the theatres.

Here was a new field of enjoyment, in which I positively revelled. Those were the days when, in one theatre—the Variétés—were to be found the combined talents of Potier, Brunet, Vernet, Tiercelin, Odry, Bosquier Gavaudin, Alcide Tousez, Lepeintre aîné, Mdlle. Flore, Jenny Vertpré, and a host of others, who have become world celebrated. Perlet, too, and Gonthier, Leontine Fay (afterwards Madame Volnys), and Déjazet, just coming into bloom at the Théâtre de Madame, since known as the Gymnase, interpreting the sparkling comedies of Scribe and Melesville; Talma and Duchesnois, Fleury, the two Baptistes, and Mdlle. Mars at the "Français"—and for the first time the theatre became an object of attraction to me. I was enchanted with the grace, the nature, the fascination of these masters of the dramatic art, and I felt a thrill of pleasure of a kind until that moment never experienced.

How I should have stared if anyone had told me, that some fifty years later I should myself be playing in French at this very same Théâtre des Variétés, to a succession of houses as crowded and as enthusiastic as were then assembled, attracted by the bright galaxy of stars I have mentioned!

On my return to London, fired with a new mania, I burned to indulge in humble imitation. A private play was soon organised at the English Opera House (the site of the present Lyceum), and I made my first attempt upon the boards of a theatre.

The news of this intended performance soon got wind, and the "private" play threatened to become almost a public one. Applications for tickets poured in from people of fashion and intellectual celebrities, and days before the event came off not a corner was to be had. Every available seat in boxes, pit, and gallery had been seized upon, and an overflow was expected—no extraordinary circumstance, perhaps, as the tickets were all *given* away. A brilliant and distinguished audience was the consequence, and as the playbills say, "hundreds were turned away from the doors." Lady Morgan, on presenting herself somewhat late, exclaimed: "Why, there's a greater rush here than to see Catalani!"

A slight contretemps nearly prevented my appearance on the occasion.

Tomkison, the pianoforte maker, had sold to my father, for my use, a handsome gray mare, called

Dairymaid, formerly a favourite hunter of Charles Young's, from whom he had purchased her, and up to a day or two previous to the evening in question she had conducted herself with the strictest propriety; but unfortunately, while I was riding to town, with a drawing-board under one arm and a bundle of playbills under the other, the careless Dairymaid stumbled and came upon her knees, pitching me heavily into the road. I escaped, however, with only a sprained ankle, but feared that I should be unable to take a part in the approaching representation.

On hearing of the accident Young called upon Tomkison, and reproached him with being the cause of the disaster.

"Why, Tomkison, how could you sell that horse to Charles Mathews? You knew she wasn't sound when you sold her."

"Pardon me, Mr. Young," said Tomkison, in his most pompous manner, "I knew nothing of the sort."

"How can you say that? Why, Tomkison, the mare wasn't sound when I sold her to *you*."

"More shame for you, Mr. Young," said Tomkison, walking away in the most dignified manner.

Tompky, as he was familiarly called, was a favourite study of Young's. His pomposity of demeanour and grandiloquent expressions were constant sources of amusement. He prided himself on being a great judge of pictures, and had always some extraordinary master-

piece, which he had "picked up" in some extraordinary manner. One day he pressed my father to look at a "magnificent Gainsborough" he had recently "picked up."

"Are you sure it *is* a Gainsborough?" said my father.

"My dear Mathews," said he, opening his eyes to their greatest extent, and taking one step back in offended amazement, "there can't be a question about it, and a marvellous specimen of that splendid master. Why do you venture to suggest so injurious a doubt?"

"Why," said my father, "a gentleman I met on board the boat crossing from Dublin to Holyhead told me it was only a copy."

"A copy!" said Tompky, in great disgust, and with ineffable contempt. "And, pray, may I ask," said he, with the peculiar pomposity which distinguished him, "may I take the great, the unwarrantable liberty of inquiring what might be this learned gentleman's name?"

"He was a stranger to me," said my father, "but he seemed to be an acquaintance of yours. He called himself 'Buggins.'"

"Buggins! Buggins! I thought so!" adding with great indignation: "Buggins be damned, he owes me forty pounds!"

This was of course conclusive. Buggins was unquestionably disqualified from giving an opinion.

Although suffering much pain from the untoward accident, I was not to be persuaded to postpone the

performance. A small handbill was distributed amongst the audience to explain the *hobble* I was in, but it turned out unnecessary, for the excitement of the evening dominated all other feelings, and I walked for the time as well as ever.

"The public is respectfully informed that M. Perlet, M. Emile, and Mr. C. J. Mathews having sprained *their* ankle, throw themselves upon the 'usual indulgence' of a generous British audience. They will put their best foot foremost in order to prevent its turning out a lame performance."*

* Mathews is here at fault as regards the actual wording of the apology. The document, which included reference to further disaster beyond that described above, ran as follows:

THEATRE ROYAL, ENGLISH OPERA HOUSE, STRAND.

Friday, April 26th, 1822.

The Ladies and Gentlemen who have honoured the Theatre with a Visit, are most respectfully informed that MRS. EDWIN has been very suddenly and seriously indisposed—In this emergency MRS. J. WEIPPART (formerly MISS I. STEVENSON) of this Theatre, has kindly undertaken the part of *Melesinda*, in the Farce called Mr. H.——The Prologue intended to have been recited by MRS. EDWIN, will be read by MR. H. himself—who solicits the customary indulgence.

As a conclusion to this complicated Apology, it is with sorrow announced that M. PERLET, M. EMILE, and Mr. C. J. Mathews, have had the misfortune of falling from *their* horse and sprained *their* right ancle—but it is anxiously hoped—that as the actors intend *to put their best leg forward*, the performance will not be considered a *lame* one.

I am enabled to give the playbill in full, thanks to my friend E. L. Blanchard, who I believe possesses the only copy of it extant, a collector of theatrical memoranda some few years back having offered five pounds for a copy, without being able to procure one.

THEATRE ROYAL, ENGLISH OPERA HOUSE, STRAND.

(PARTICULARLY PRIVATE.)

This present Friday, April 26th, 1822, will be presented a Farce, called

MR. H——.

(N.B. This Piece was damned at Drury Lane Theatre.)

Mr. H—— ... Captain Hill. Landlord ... Mr. Gyles.
Belvil ... Mr. C. Byrne.
Melesinda ... Mrs. Edwin. Betty ... Mrs. Bryan.

Previous to which a Prologue will be spoken by Mrs. Edwin.

After the Farce (for the first time in this country, and now performing with immense success in Paris), a French Petite Comedie, called

LE COMÉDIEN D'ETAMPES.

(N.B. This Piece was never acted in London, and may very probably be damned here.)

Dorival (le Comédien) ... ... M. Perlet.

(Positively for this night only, as he is engaged to play the same part at Paris to-morrow evening.)

M. Macbou de Beaubuison ... ... Mr. J. D'Egville.
L. Dupre ... M. Giubilei. Baptiste ... Mr. W. Peake.
M. Corbin ... Mr. O. Byrne. Madeline ... Madame Spittallier.

Immediately after which,

"A Lover's Confession," in the shape of a song by M. Emile.

(From the Theatre de la Porte St. Martin, at Paris.)

To conclude with a Pathetic Drama, in one Act, called

THE SORROWS OF WERTHER.

(N.B. This Piece was damned at Covent Garden Theatre.)

Werther ... ... Mr. C. J. Mathews.

Schmidt (his friend) ... Mr. J. D'Egville. Albert ... Mr. Gyles.

Fritz (Werther's servant) ... ... Mr. R. B. Peake.

Snap (Albert's servant) ... ... Mr. W. Peake.

Charlotte ... ... Mrs. Mathews.

Brothers and Sisters of Charlotte, by six Cherubims got for the occasion.

ORCHESTRA.

Leader of the Band, Mr. Knight. Conductor, Mr. E. Knight.

Piano Forte, Mr. Knight, jun. Harpsichord, Master Knight (that was).

Clavecin, by the Father of the Knights (to come).

Vivat Rex! No money returned (because none will be taken).

☞ On account of the above surprising novelty, not an ORDER can possibly be admitted: but it is requested, that if such a thing find its way to the front of the house, IT WILL BE KEPT.

I need scarcely explain that M. Perlet, M. Emile, and Mr. C. J. Mathews were one and the same person. The parts were played in imitation of the great originals, and my success was quite bewildering. My personification of the French actors was pronounced perfect, and an unmistakable compliment was paid to my representation of Perlet in particular, both in manner, voice, and appearance, by a visit from Paul the French dancer, who had been among the spectators, and who, being on intimate terms with Perlet, came round to shake hands with his supposed friend. On being informed of his mistake he was still incredulous,

and I had to admit him to my dressing-room to convince him of his error. This was unpurchased criticism.*

The farce of "Mr. H.," with which the entertainment commenced, was written by Charles Lamb, and a witty prologue for this occasion was contributed by James Smith, and admirably spoken by Mrs. Edwin. The piece had been, why I can't say, unsuccessfully produced some years before at Drury Lane. It was very whimsical, and went off, as it is termed, "with roars." The part of Mr. H. was certainly capitally acted by Captain Hill, an amateur of long practice at the Woolwich theatricals; and the Landlord by Mr. Gyles, an established favourite at the Kilkenny theatricals. Mrs. Edwin, the charming actress of the London theatres, and Mrs. Bryan, a first-rate soubrette, completed the cast.

Indeed, Captain Hill's triumph was so great that it induced him to embrace the stage as a profession. He was long known as Benson Hill, and became a popular actor and author.

The "Comédien d'Etampes" followed, in which I played Dorival, in imitation of Perlet, and assumed three or four different characters. Macbou de

* "I had an opportunity of appreciating your most excellent imitation of Perlet on Friday last," wrote the elder Mathews to Charles two years after this performance. "I saw him in two pieces—Ricco and Maison en Loterie. Your likeness of his countenance is quite surprising."

Beaubuison was excellently played and sung by my friend James D'Egville. The other characters were well supported by Oscar Byrne, the well-known ballet-master, and his brother Charles; Giubilei, the equally well-known bass singer, and Madame Spittallier, a piquante little French actress.

The concluding piece was a parody on the "Sorrows of Werther," written by John Poole, the author of "Paul Pry." Like "Mr. H." at Drury Lane, it had been unsuccessful at Covent Garden, probably from the original rhapsody of Gœthe not being sufficiently known to the general public; and yet Liston and Mrs. Liston, as Werther and Charlotte, must have been exquisitely droll.

On this occasion I played Werther, which I think must have been a very poor performance, though so greatly praised, as amateur acting always is; and my mother played Charlotte, looking very pretty, and acting charmingly.

The opening scene, with Charlotte cutting huge slices of bread-and-butter for her six little brothers and sisters, and Fritz hanging a dozen of Werther's tear-bedewed pocket-handkerchiefs, of all sizes and colours, on a string to dry, was a ludicrous commencement. Fritz was played with great humour by Richard Peake the dramatist. His brother William and Gyles were very funny as Albert and Schnaps.

The pianoforte, which formed the full orchestra, was

presided at by Edward Knight, a most brilliant professor, brother of J. P. Knight, the Royal Academician, both sons of the popular London actor, known to the public as "Little Knight."

The whole programme gave the greatest satisfaction; and little did I think, while playing the "Comédien d'Etampes," that I should one day, on the very same spot, play the same part in English to a paying public, under the title of "He would be an Actor."

"Little did I think" is a phrase which every man has to make use of frequently in the course of his life. It occurs to me so perpetually that it becomes wearisome to myself; it applies to almost every event that ever happened to me.

So pleased was my father with my performance, that he seriously urged me to adopt the stage as a profession; but I was true to my first love, and could not be persuaded to abandon architecture, to which I was heart and soul devoted. It has often been asserted that my father had a rooted objection to my becoming an actor, and that I did so contrary to his wish. This was not the case. He loved his profession as much as I loved mine. He certainly had a horror of my having anything to do with the theatre, unless possessed of such decided talent as would ensure my taking a first position. But from the moment he felt satisfied in his own mind that I showed sufficient promise to warrant the experiment, he was most anxious that I should venture it. I however

resisted the pressure ; and it was not till after his death that circumstances induced—nay, I may say forced—me to alter my determination.

My father was of a remarkably sensitive temperament, quick in his speech and manner, and his nerves seemed hung on elastic wires, which the slightest touch agitated. The falling of a spoon on the sideboard, or the jingling of glasses, would shake him to his foundation. His irritability was excited by the veriest trifles, while he would bear real misfortune with perfect philosophy. And yet, in the midst of a frenzy of passion, such was his keen sense of humour, that one touch of the ridiculous, like a drop of oil on troubled water, would restore his equanimity in a moment.

My pony having lost a shoe, I on one occasion borrowed a very valuable thorough-bred horse of my father's to take me to town. I put him up at livery as usual, in the mews behind my office. In the course of the afternoon, fancying a ride, my father called on me to point out the stable. On reaching it, what was his disgust at finding the horse standing, with all his mud upon him, just as I had brought him in hours before! In a frenzy of rage, he laid about him.

"Where's Mr. Price? where's the ostler? Of all the shameful, disgraceful things I ever met with! A valuable horse like this left without grooming! It's enough to ruin him! Where's Mr. Price? Where's the ostler?"

But no one appeared upon whom he could wreak his vengeance. At last an old woman showed her nose over the staircase.

"Oh, here's Mrs. Price," said I.

"Very pretty indeed!" resumed my father. "Here's a horse, worth a hundred and fifty guineas, left in your abominable stable for five hours, with all his dirt upon him! It's shameful—you ought to be ashamed of yourselves! As sure as your name's Price, I'll bring an action against you all, and make you pay for it!"

And so on he went for another ten minutes, exhausting his passion in every invective he could think of, till at last it died out for want of fuel, and he came to a stop and paused for a reply, when the old lady, with a sweet smile, mildly asked:

"Has anything happened, sir?"

She was as deaf as a post, and hadn't heard a word. His anger was gone in a minute, and, in a fit of laughter, he bolted out of the stable.

His servant being ill, he had consented to allow his brother, a timid youth from the country, to take his place for a short time, and for that short time he was a constant source of annoyance.

One morning, having many letters to write, and much study to get through, he called him into the room.

"Now, Edward——"

"Yes, sir."

"Don't—don't say 'Yes, sir,' before you know what I'm going to say."

"No, sir."

"'No, sir'—that's as bad. Now mind, I hold you responsible——"

"Yes, sir; certainly, sir."

"What for?"

"I don't know, sir."

"Then wait till you do. Now mind, I say, you mustn't let an individual within these doors to-day. You understand?"

"Yes, sir, in course—not an individual."

"I hold you responsible."

"Yes, sir. In course, sir."

About an hour afterwards, when in the heart of his study, a loud ring at the bell bespoke visitors, and to his dismay the door was thrown open, and in walked a bevy of chattering neighbours. With a complacent smile, the ill-fated Edward announced "Mrs. Gathercrop and the Miss Gathercrops," people who were sure to lose him his whole morning. Wild with rage, he showed the unlucky imp, by the most expressive grimaces, that he had made a gross mistake.

A little while after, while entertaining these chatterers and wishing them anywhere else, another loud ring announced another interruption. Rather glad this time at the chance of someone to share his torment, he

waited expectantly, but no one appeared. Edward was summoned.

"Well! who was that?"

"Please, sir, it was Mr. Coleridge."

"Oh," said Mrs. Gathercrop, "Mr. Coleridge the poet! How lucky, to be sure!"

"Well, where is he?"

"Please, sir, he's gone."

"Gone? why didn't you show him in?"

"Why, please, sir, I didn't like."

"Didn't like! what do you mean?"

"Please, sir, you looked so savage at me when I let in *these*."

There was nothing but a laugh left for it. When they were gone, my father, whose good humour was restored by the whimsicality of the incident, summoned the terrified Edward again.

"Now, my good boy," said he kindly, "I am not angry with you, so don't be frightened, but tell me honestly, why did you let in those people? Didn't I tell you that not an individual was to be admitted?"

"Yes, sir; but, please, sir, I thought you never could call such a nice lady as that an 'individual.'"

"Good boy," said my father, "there's sixpence for you."

He had a gardener and farm-servant he doted on, for the very reason that many people would have discharged him. His blunders and his simplicity were perfectly refreshing. He was a regular Somersetshire

boor; and many a lesson my father got from his delicious dialect and manner. He used actually to send him to the play to enjoy his account of it the next morning. On the first occasion he came up, hat in hand, and said:

"Please, measter, mon I tak my fan wi' me?"

"Your fan?" said my father, thinking it rather an odd request.

"I'll tak her wi' a string." He meant his dog.

On visiting the farmyard one day, to his horror my father found the door of the rabbit-hutch wide open and the hutch empty.

"Where's Hargreave?"

"Here I be, measter."

"Where are the rabbits?"

"Nay, I dwoant knaw. I canna see nout an em noa whar."

"Not see them? what do you mean?"

"Whoi, when I coom deaun this marnin', I feaund t' door open loike, just as you sees un neaw. I think rats maun a' killed un."

"Rats! nonsense. They couldn't open the door and swallow rabbits ten times larger than themselves, man! It's all your carelessness, sir; you must have left the hutch open last night."

"Nay, do 'ee think so?"

"Think so? I'm sure so. A pretty fellow you must be. It's disgraceful neglect. You wouldn't have left the door open if they had been your own rabbits."

"Nay," said Hargreave, with a cunning leer on his face, "nay, that I wouldn't."

The candour of the avowal was too much for my father, and away he ran.

At the expiration of my articles with Pugin, the time arrived to enter an architect's office, and acquire the practical part of the profession; and Mr. Nash renewed the offer he had made to receive me, but a circumstance occurred which completely altered all previous arrangements.

Lord Blessington, an old friend of my father, was on the point of starting for Mountjoy Forest, his seat in Ireland, and, among other improvements he contemplated there, he was bent upon the erection of a castle on his Tyrone estate. Accidentally looking over the plans and drawings I had executed in the course of my study, and approving the gallery and library I had built at home, he conceived the idea of my proceeding to Ireland, surveying the estate, and furnishing plans and estimates for his new house, and in a few days my father received the following letter:

"Mountjoy Forest, August 2, 1823.

"MY DEAR MATHEWS,

"I am determined to build a house here next spring, and I should like to give your son an opportunity of making his début as an architect.

"If you like the idea, send him off forthwith to Liverpool or Holyhead, from which places steamers go, and by the Derry mail he will be here (with resting a day in Dublin) in five days; but he must lose no time in setting off. I will bring him back in my carriage.

"Remember me most kindly to Mrs. Mathews,

"And believe me,

"Ever yours truly,

"BLESSINGTON.

"I saw Captain Saunders at Stratford, and he is to show me *the spot* on my return.

"I suppose it would be utterly useless my asking you to come with Charles; but if you wish to spend a week in one of the most beautiful spots in Ireland, eat the best venison, Highland mutton and rabbits, and drink the best claret in Ireland, this is the place; and you would be received with undivided applause, and I would give you some comical dresses for your kit.

"Yours,

"B."

My father jumped at the idea, and I jumped twice as high as my father, for my heart bounded as well as my heels.

A journey to the north of Ireland in those days was rather a different affair to what it is now. In the first place, I had to wait a couple of days before I could start

at all, the mail being full, and there was again the same check in Dublin. This last delay, however, I did not regret, as Catalani was singing there; and I had the gratification of seeing and hearing her, and her personal beauty, her exquisite voice, and marvellous execution have never been forgotten. Indeed, I think, whether justly or not I cannot say, that she was superior to all the singers who have appeared from that day to this.*

On arriving by mail at Omagh, I found I had to take a postchaise to Mountjoy Forest. Lord Blessington was absent for a day or two at Korrich, and I had the house to myself, with full range of the domain till he returned. Guns, fishing-rods, horses, books were at my disposal, and with lovely scenery and fine weather, what more could I desire?

He soon made his appearance, and we commenced at once our grand project, and revelled in the delightful occupation of building castles in the air.

For a couple of months I led a charmed life; the pleasant task of surveying and planning my fairy palace was not the only resource I had. Stag-hunting, rabbit-shooting, fishing, and sight-seeing formed not the least part of the severe duties I had to perform. Fifty

* "Yet though Catalani is so delightful, and overwhelms you with beautiful passages, she now and then comes out with such a hideous howl, which is so diabolically scientific, that it really makes you shudder," is a modification of this criticism, which appears in a letter from Mathews to his mother, dated August 17, 1823.

different plans were furnished, and fifty different alterations were suggested, till the time ran away, and we were not much further advanced than when we started. Lord Blessington was absorbed in his grand idea, and went mad over the details. Suggestion upon suggestion and alteration upon alteration succeeded each other hour by hour; but, nothing daunted, I followed all his caprices with patience and good humour, and even derived amusement from his flights of fancy.

I was shrewd enough to discover very soon that my chief charm lay in my acquiescence with his whims, and patience with his vacillations. He had already been furnished with plans, on a very magnificent scale, for a castle by Wyatt, and not a suggestion permitted, not an opinion allowed him—the architect's word was law. This did not suit him at all.

The fact is, *he* wanted to design the mansion and suggest all the arrangements, and only required someone to put his ideas in shape, make the necessary specifications, and carry out the practical details. I was just the person for him—ardent as himself, and rather delighting in, than objecting to the constant exercise for ingenuity his exuberant conceptions afforded me, and we laboured capitally together.

At last, after much deliberation, and twenty changes of opinion, we got so far as to select an appropriate site, and actually to mark out the ground-plan to the proper scale, digging up the turf at the chosen spot; and this

turned out to be all that ever was destined to be done towards the realisation of our dreams.

We then returned to town, and heartily sorry I was that the fun was over.

In allusion to this circumstance, Dr. Madden says: "His lordship abandoned the idea of building, and returned *re infecta* to London. His lordship's powers of volition were so singularly weak, that he rarely was enabled to bring any matter whatever to an accomplishment which he willed or undertook."

But Dr. Madden was wrong—at any rate in this instance. So far from abandoning the idea of building, Lord Blessington invited me to accompany him to Naples, where he had left his family some weeks before, in order that I might, under his own eye, complete the plans and prepare the working drawings necessary to carry out his favourite project. That he was unable ultimately to bring the matter to an accomplishment is true, but the impossibility arose from want of funds, and not from want of will, as he never to the last gave up the hope of some day achieving his desire.

CHAPTER III.

CORRESPONDENCE, 1823.

CHARLES J. MATHEWS TO CHARLES MATHEWS.

"March 11th, 1823.

"My dear Father,

"My mother has been so exceedingly greedy of news that she has completely forestalled me, and not left me an item to retail to you, consequently I have not one single interesting particular to relate; nevertheless, I cannot resist writing to you once more before you return, though, according to the laws of good breeding, you do not deserve it, as you never sent me any answer to my first.

"You will not be surprised I daresay when I tell you how delighted I shall be, and with what pleasure I look forward to the expiration of my four years at Pugin's, though, to do them justice, they have for a long time past been uniformly kind to me. There is a new work of his upon the point of appearing, in which there are several plates with my name to them: this is very friendly on his part, since it is a rule among artists never to allow the names of their pupils to be attached to their works until their engagements or apprenticeships have

expired. Of course all plans for my future occupation will be left till you come home, though I have a little scheme to suggest which I am in great hopes you will approve of.

"I have seen a great deal of Mr. Soane, and experienced great kindness and attention from him. He took me with him one day to the bank—a great part of which he has built—and explained to me all the difficulties he had to contend with in the construction. He also gave me permission to make any drawings there that I pleased—a very great favour and very seldom granted to anyone. He has just finished a new entrance to the House of Lords, which is universally admired, and has drawn down eulogiums upon him from everybody.

"The bare mention of your return home, in your last letter, has given myself and my mother the most unbounded joy; besides the delight of again seeing you after so long an absence, *I* have additional reason for hoping that it will be 'speedy and soon,' as I have arranged among the rest of the rejoicings and fêtes, on your arrival, that another private play, better executed than the last, shall be got up for your amusement (and mine) at the English Opera, which Mr. Arnold has again offered to me gratis; and I am sure that you will agree with my mother and me that there can be no harm in an *annual* amusement of the kind, if not allowed to interfere with more serious studies.

"Mr. Elmes, the architect, has just published a life of Sir C. Wren, a very large quarto work, very highly spoken of, and of great interest, in which he mentions my name as having communicated some interesting intelligence, and speaks of me as 'a promising young architect.' When he pointed it out to me I told him that I not only *promised* but *performed*. You may, perhaps, have heard the joke before, but 'it made a great laugh at the time.'

"I have now only time to mention that Tiny has lost her coat, and Poll her spirits, the bullfinches their notes, and Hargreave his dialect, the garden its beauty, Lion his content, and Hector his love of being tied up. To all these I have only to add that my mother and I have lost all our love and affection for you and all anxiety to see you again, while I remain,

"Your undutiful Son,

"C. J. MATHEWS."

CHARLES J. MATHEWS TO MRS. MATHEWS.

"Dublin, 12th August, 1823.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,

"As I had so little time for writing my two first letters I could only give you the general heads of my journey, and therefore must now give you the little interesting incidents which always take place on so long a journey. . . . I had an Irish gentleman in the berth under me (for I was of higher birth than any of them),

who made me laugh the whole time, in spite of my illness. 'I thought I should have died at him.' He never moved from his bed, but constantly interrogated the steward as to our progress. The instant daylight appeared, he began. 'Stewart!' 'Sir!' 'Are we in Doblin Bay yet?' 'No, sir; not yet in sight of Holyhead!' 'Oh blod an' 'ouns!' In five minutes more: 'Stewart, are we at Donlary?' 'Not at Holyhead yet, sir!' 'Oh blod an' 'ouns!' 'Stewart, do you think we shall be at Donlary by two o'clock?' 'No, sir; I'm afraid not before eight.' 'Oh blod an' 'ouns.' Some such question every five minutes, and invariably the same answer. As soon as I arrived in Dublin I went to Elder's house, which is in the same street as my hotel. On inquiring if he was within, they told me he was; but on searching, they discovered that he was just gone out, probably to the theatre. I asked if he sat up late? they said, 'yes.' Then replied I with infinite promptitude, 'I'll call on him after the play.' (N.B.—THEY were a man-servant, a woman, and a little boy, who all opened the door to me.) After the play I called. 'Is Mr. Elder returned?' 'No, sir.' 'Don't you expect him then to-night?' 'No, sir; not till Wednesday.' 'Wednesday!!' 'Yes, sir; he has been out of town this three weeks.' Wasn't this charming? I then went to Mr. Willis, who was shut up and gone to bed. I entered the theatre just in time to hear Mad. Catalani sing '*Non piu andrai*' and 'God Save

the King.' She sang '*Non piu*' much better than I do now, or should ever be able to do. I, therefore, from this moment, give it up to her. I tried to get into Morrison's, but the hotel was quite full; so I went to the 'Waterford,' which was highly recommended; and of all the horrible places I ever was in, it is the worst. One towel, no water for the teeth, no soap, no snuffers, no extinguisher, no northun; three blankets, two sheets, and a counterpane on the bed—bed a sack of potatoes. No window in the house had been opened for a month at least. When I went there after the play, I found all my luggage still in the hall where I had left it. When I said I was going to bed, a male chambermaid appeared with a candle, and another male with a warming-pan. 'Jack, take the gentleman's luggage up.' 'Take it yourself; sure you're strong enough.' 'I shan't.' 'Well, then lave it!' 'Well, gentlemen,' said I, 'I suppose I must carry it myself.' 'No, sir; it'll be all right just now; asy, honey, take up the gentleman's pork-mantel;' and after a great deal of this sort of gentlemanlike argument, they did me the favour to share it between them. . . .

"Your most affectionate Son,

"CHARLES J. MATHEWS."

CHARLES J. MATHEWS TO CHARLES MATHEWS.

"Mountjoy Forest, Omagh, Aug. 25.

"MY DEAR FATHER,

"No one knows what he can do till he tries. When I set off from London, I had not the slightest

idea that I was capable of executing what I have done since. I find everything come as naturally as if I had been building all my life. When I first went to Paris, I had not imagined that I was master of three French words; but, when I tried, I found I could speak tolerably well. Since I wrote last, I have surveyed the ground—surveying I never learnt till now—and made plans for the house, which Lord Blesinton* highly approves of. He has determined to begin building next summer, when Lady Blesinton is coming over here. I don't know whether he has written to you yet, but if he has not you will hear soon, to try and gain you over to his wish, which is as follows: As nothing can be done till Lady B. approves of the drawings, and as he has room in his carriage, he wishes to take me with him to Naples and from thence to Rome, where she is at present, and there, after her approval, I can make all my necessary workmen's drawings at his château. Now though I should very much like this plan, of course, I hope you will not imagine that I should now be so childish as to be disappointed at a refusal. You cannot doubt but that I should be delighted at seeing Rome, particularly under such advantageous circumstances; but still, though I could make a great many sketches of views and architecture which might form my taste in a great

* The Earl of Blessington's name is frequently spelt thus in the letters which Mathews had preserved. Indeed, in one instance at least, Lady Blessington signs herself "M. Blesinton."

degree, yet I do not consider that I could make that great improvement which is only to be derived from deep study of the buildings, and accurate measurements taken in concert with another architect. So far I honestly confess, that if I should go now, it would be more a trip of pleasure—except with regard to the drawings for this house—than of study, and though it would doubtless be of great use to have seen and sketched the finest buildings in the world, and would give me a greater taste and scope for designing, yet it would still be necessary at some future time, when I had acquired more scientific knowledge in an architect's office, to go there again in company with some young architect to examine and measure in the most exact manner every building of consequence and beauty. There is one thing, however, that might be of essential service to me, viz. the introduction, through Lord Blesinton, to the chief nobility and literati resident at Rome. These persons I hear Lord B. constantly speak of, and describe as frequently at his house at Rome, and also at Venice. I need not say that introductions of this kind are of immense service, particularly to an architect, in places like Rome, Naples, or Venice. But I have now stated everything that occurs to me, for and against; it is now for you to determine as you think most wise and convenient, and as my mother also will most wish. I only wish you to understand that however you may arrange, *I* shall consider *that* the best, and shall not be at all

disappointed at not going. . . . Believe me, my dear father,

"Your affectionate Son,

"CHARLES JAMES MATHEWS."

CHARLES J. MATHEWS TO MRS. MATHEWS.

"Mountjoy Forest, August 31st, 1823.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,

"I was particularly uneasy at hearing of your distress about my last letter, because I know that you will have waited the same time before you receive this. However, all I can say is this, that I really have not had it in my power this week to write, for the whole time has been devoted to our house. I have set out the plan on the ground and raised stones to the height of six feet all round the building, in order to judge of the effect from the lower windows. When this was done, to my great mortification, I was not able to get a view of a certain piece of river and stone bridge, which I had calculated upon, for, owing to a wind that the water took, it was lost by the effect of perspective. However, all difficulties are instantly removed here, and I am going to set them to work to turn the course of the river, by which means we shall get the most beautiful view imaginable. On the other side we have a mountain which is very much in our way, so orders are given to shave it all away. A whole plantation is already cut down; and a large bare mountain, very

disagreeable to have always staring us in the face, is to be planted with firs and larch all over, for which purpose one hundred and fifty thousand are already removed from the nursery to the spot. Are not these grand doings?

"I am delighted to find that you and my father are in so happy a disposition towards the proposed tour, and if my last letter had the effect of persuasion, I think this must decide you, for, since I wrote, I have had a longer and more detailed explanation from his lordship. We go first to Naples, where Lady Blesinton—I believe I told you—now is. They are there particularly intimate with a Mons. Artaud, the governor of the Academy and Museum, who proceeds with them to Rome, and who knows every inch of stone-work in the city, and who has examined, measured, and drawn all the buildings. He is acquainted with all the architects and men of science in Rome, and will give me, on Lord Blesinton's account, every advantage. At Rome they take a house, and, as Lady B. is particularly fond of it, they intend remaining there six weeks! Here is time enough to do wonders, when instructed in the proper manner to set about it. They are also intimate with Denon and Lord Byron, both of whom we should see a great deal of. Added to all this Lord Blesinton has a vessel of his own, in which he intends crossing over to Greece! visiting Ionia and Magna Græcia and so on to Athens! There's an opportunity which I really think ought not to be lost. He

mentioned a great many other advantages which he must explain when he sees you, for I was so bewildered with the great names of Italy and Greece, Rome and Athens, Temples of Minerva and Colosseums, Venetian gondoliers, rialtos, and burning mountains, that I could not attend to more commonplace subjects. However, I'll leave this subject, or I should fill up my whole letter with it.

"I never was more astonished than at hearing of my father's reappearance. I had not heard of it before, for we see no English paper here. I am delighted to hear of the success, but am 'a little damned mad' at not being able to see him. I hope he will not injure his American entertainment by it. I have also made my reappearance. I opened last night here in Jeremy Diddler and Dr. Last, with immense success. Fainwould, Charles Gardiner; Sam, Lord Blesinton. It was done for the amusement of the children, and had more than the desired effect. I made up capital dresses for both parts, and particularly hit them in Dr. Last.

"A gentleman here was invited to a large house in the neighbourhood and was offered a bed. He undressed himself in his dressing-room, put out his candle, and entered his bedroom. But after groping round and round the room for some time he could not find any bed, and, there being no bell, he laid himself down on the rug and slept till morning. On awaking he discovered

that there was a most beautiful bed in the *middle* of the room.

"With best love to Papa,

"Your truly affectionate Son,

"CHARLES JAMES MATHEWS."

CHARLES MATHEWS TO THE EARL OF BLESSINGTON.

"Highgate, Sept. 2, 1823.

"MY LORD,

"The recovery of a long character and the daily attendance at the rehearsals of it, has prevented an earlier acknowledgment of your lordship's kind letter, to which your speedy return to town precludes the necessity of a long reply. I was also apprehensive that my letter might arrive at Mountjoy about the time fixed for the departure from thence. Indeed, indeed, my lord, I cannot find language to convey the high sense I have of the honour and friendship you have conferred on me in the person of Charles, nor of the gratification I feel that you deem him worthy of the proposed distinction of residing with Lady Blessington and yourself during the winter. If I paused for one moment in giving my assent to so obviously advantageous a proposal, it was purely from regard to a fond mother's feelings at parting from her son for so long a period; but I find her willing, and am anxious to waive all selfish consideration in order to give him the whole advantage of your lordship's invaluable friendship,

and, regardless of aught else, to ensure his welfare in your continued kind feeling towards him. With all thankfulness for so unexpected and great proof of it, she yields up Charles to your lordship's and Lady Blessington's entire direction; well assured and satisfied that under such auspices and associations he must acquire much, and improve in all things that can ensure him present delight and lasting honour. May he, my lord, as fully deserve the distinction he now experiences in your good opinion and personal notice, as I know he is sensible of its value and just in his appreciation of his good fortune in having obtained it.

"As I am so soon to have the pleasure of seeing you, my lord, I shall reserve all further testimony of the warm feelings of gratitude you have excited until we meet, when you will find me what I have always been, and ever must remain,

"Your Lordship's most obliged and faithful Servant,

"C. MATHEWS.

"My wife begs me to add her most respectful regards to your lordship and to Lady B. when you write to Italy. She would have written a postscript to this but for a slight return of her late complaint in her head.

"Will your lordship do us the favour to give our affectionate regards to Charles?"

CHAPTER IV.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY—FIRST VISIT TO ITALY, 1823-1824.

On the receipt of Lord Blessington's invitation, my father looked at my mother, and my mother looked at my father, then both looked at me, and I looked at them both, and I believe the tears stood in all our eyes. To send me away, and for a whole year, too—I, who had never crept from under the parental wing—was a startling idea. But all considerations vanished before that of my welfare, and at length consent was joyfully and gratefully given.

As for me, I walked on air. Italy! Could it really be? The land of my dreams! I could hardly believe my senses. A few days only were allowed for preparation, which was all the better, as our minds were too fully occupied with the necessary details of the expedition to dwell upon the pain of separation. But the moment at last actually arrived, and, on the twenty-first of September, 1823, eyes were wiped, and handkerchiefs waved, as, comfortably ensconced in the well-laden travelling-carriage, four post-horses rattled us away from St. James's Square.

A voluminous diary, rigidly kept, furnishes an ample account of our progress. It contains a tremendously elaborate description of the scenery, and all objects of interest on the road, with historical notes attached, forming a book of reference worthy of Murray himself. But, of course, the first impressions of a lad just beginning life are not worth recording, especially through lands now so familiar to all, and about which the ubiquitous Murray has since exhausted every possible form of expression. Besides, it would take as long to describe the journey as it did to perform it.

Lord Blessington loved his ease, and had no notion of hurry, so that I had ample opportunity for seeing all that was worth seeing, and I need scarcely say that my eyes were like saucers, and my ears as wide open as that of Dionysius.

Sir Charles Sutton, a most agreeable, well-informed companion, accompanied us, and he and I rambled for hours together, exploring all the places of interest we stopped at. Lord Blessington was not a walker, was a hater of sight-seeing, and, moreover, a late riser, breakfasting in bed, and reading his book or newspaper there till late in the day, so we saw little of him except when travelling, or at meal-time.

A few extracts from my journal, omitting raptures and descriptions of places, will give an idea of the pleasant style of travelling of the pre-railroad days, before the terms "fast" and "go-ahead" were invented,

when the world studied its comfort and enjoyment on a tour more than the mere "doing" foreign countries in droves, with a haste that puts the traveller on about a par with an intelligent portmanteau.

For business, by all means a railway train—for a commercial traveller, a godsend; but for pleasure, a luxurious carriage with four horses, the leisure to enjoy the picturesque, and stop wherever a tempting spot invites, and, above all, free from the horrors of a table-d'hôte. Better really see and appreciate quietly and thoroughly whatever is worthy of notice, than fly like lightning past places of interest, as though they never existed.

"Did you go to Rome?"

"Rome? Did we, mamma? Oh yes, I remember now. It was the place where we saw that old beggar woman with the child, on the steps of a church."

This is hardly an exaggeration of the recollections some travellers carry away.

Sept. 21.—Left London. Dined with Mr. Tegart at Eltham, and slept at Sittingbourne.

Sept. 22.—Started early for Dover. Reached Calais at four, and slept at Boulogne.

Sept. 23.—Dined at Abbeville, and slept at Granvilliers.

Sept. 24.—Dined at Beauvais, and, proceeding along

the old, dull, monotonous, paved avenues, reached Paris at six.

Sept. 25.—A day's rest in Paris.

Sept. 26.—Left at twelve o'clock, with six horses, and slept at Fontainebleau. Explored at leisure the Château and Forest.

Sept. 27.—Slept at Auxerre.

Sept. 28.—Off early. At Dôle a facetious barber has over his door: "Demain on rase pour rien." The poor peasants arrive to claim his promise, but of course "demain" never comes. If we could read the "Hodie mihi, cras tibi" of the tombstone in the same way, what a comfort it would be! But Death is a barber who never jokes; and when he shaves, it is so effectually that the customer never troubles him again. Slept at Poligny.

Sept. 30.—Pouring with rain. Crossed the Jura, and arrived at Geneva. Stopped at Sécheron, a fashionable bad inn, about a mile out of the town, but delightfully situated on the brink of the lake. Here, to our great astonishment and pleasure, we found the Speaker of the House of Commons, the Hon. Manners Sutton, and Mrs. Home Purves (afterwards Lord and Lady Canterbury), with their children and governesses, who had arrived the day before. After doing them the honour to eat part of their excellent dinner, we went to bed, all of us tolerably fatigued.

Nov. 1.—How charming was the view that presented

itself this morning on waking! The sparkling azure lake, with the sun playing upon it, and the superb mountains surrounding it; Mont Blanc peeping from behind the snowy points in the distance, relieved upon the blue sky, and the town of Geneva on our right, formed one glare of light altogether dazzling.

Nov. 2.—To-day Sir Charles and I sallied forth to explore the town—to see the house where Rousseau was born, and pay a visit to Ferney, the former residence of Voltaire, situated about two miles from Geneva. There is very little to induce persons to take the trouble of seeing it, except the Englishman's satisfaction of saying he has seen it. The bedroom is said to be exactly in the same state as when its master occupied it. Over the bed is a bad crayon drawing of Le Kain, on his right Frederick the Great, on his left Madame de Chatelet, Voltaire's mistress—both wretched daubs. Opposite the fireplace is a plain monument of black marble, with these inscriptions: "Mon esprit est partout, et mon cœur est ici;" "Mes manes sont consolés, puisque mon cœur est au milieu de vous;" both of which are rendered unmeaning, from the vase which contained the heart having been, for some reason or other, removed.

Nov. 3.—This morning it was determined we should again begin our journey; but an arrangement was suggested which gave great pleasure to all—that Mrs. Purves and the Speaker should accompany us to Naples, on a visit to Lady Blessington; owing to

which our departure was deferred till the following morning.

In the meantime all our inquiries were directed towards the manner of passing the Simplon; of carrying provisions for said passage, and arming ourselves against the extreme cold we were to meet with. Sheepskins, worsted, lambswool, umbrellas, shawls, handkerchiefs, and every description of preventive that could possibly be suggested was in requisition.

How ludicrous it sounds nowadays, when a railway over Mont Cenis and a tunnel under it have opened the doors of Italy to every shopkeeper with a handbag and a few pounds in his pocket—when Cook's excursionists swarm in every capital of Europe, thousands of fools rushing cheaply in where formerly only moneyed angels dared to tread—to hear of the awful hazard of life and limb, task of peril and adventure, it was considered to cross the Alps fifty years ago!

Everyone had his history to relate of the horrors of the extreme frigidity. One gentleman, who merely withdrew his hand from his glove to remove an icicle from his nose, had his fingers so benumbed as to be unable to replace them; and, in short, had we been starting for a voyage to the north pole, more preparations could not have been made.

Nov. 4.—Everything being at last arranged, we found to our sorrow that the Duc de Montebello was to start before us with three carriages, forcing another

delay; for if the Duc de Montebello monopolised all the post-horses the Earl of Blessington and his party must go without, which, with four heavy carriages, would have been no easy matter. One day longer, then, we must stay, and to-morrow was again positively fixed.

Nov. 5.—At last, on Sunday morning, at half-past five, we were once more in motion. In the course of the night a great fall of snow had entirely covered the Jura mountains, and the sun, which had just risen, shone with all its brightness upon them. Nothing half so magnificent can be conceived. The whole of the immense chain of the Jura, at first suffused with the most delicate roseate tints, suddenly became one mass of solid gold. It was a sight never to be forgotten. Slept at St. Maurice.

Nov. 6.—Left St. Maurice at four o'clock. Slept at Sion.

Nov. 7.—Before daybreak we set forth on the most interesting day's journey we had yet met with; to cross the Simplon.

Being determined that my faculties should not be benumbed and rendered useless by the intense cold, I prepared myself before starting with the following articles of dress: Two pairs of stockings, a pair of snow-shoes over my boots, a pair of gaiters, two pairs of trowsers, two shirts, two waistcoats, a woollen comforter over my chin, a coat, a great-coat, a cloak, a nightcap,

a travelling cap, and a pair of skin gloves, resembling a couple of young unlicked bear cubs. With this wardrobe on me I thought myself tolerably secure from at least a part of the cold; and so in the end it proved, for while ascending the mountain on the box of the carriage I was ready to melt with the heat; but I comforted myself with knowing, that, once arrived at the summit, the excessive cold would make amends for my present sufferings. But, alas! it only became worse and worse; that is, warmer and warmer, till, when at last we reached the highest point, and were in the midst of snow and ice, my only hope vanished; the sun burst out in all his glory, continued to fry for the rest of the day, and reduced me to a state of absolute liquefaction.

"*Non fidatevi all' Alchimista povero, o al medico ammalato,*" or to a hosier's advice when you cross the Simplon. Slept at Baveno, on the banks of the Lago Maggiore.

Nov. 8.—After a beautiful day's journey along its banks, between five and six o'clock we entered Milan. We found that the Speaker and Mrs. Purves, who had arrived some time before us, were gone for a stroll through the town, and had ordered dinner at seven o'clock. Now, as I wished to go to the play, I determined, instead of waiting for them, to go and dine at some restaurateur's near the theatre, in order to be ready. Having taken a valet-de-place to interpret

and show me the way to the Teátro Ré (I knowing neither the city nor the language), I walked through the piazza before the cathedral, and in a small side street he pointed it out, and close to it a little door, which he said was the restaurateur's, where I could dine very well, and where he believed they spoke French. So saying he left me to my fate, and I entered a dirty dark little room, full of porters playing dominoes and smoking. I passed on, however, to find the salle-à-manger, and arrived in a smoky hot kitchen, with cooks and scullions not in the most elegant deshabille. I now began to inquire where I was to dine, but with all the French, broken English, dog Latin, and bad Italian I could muster I could make none of them understand what I meant, and only gathered, from the pantomime of the head-cook, that I must eat in the kitchen. My situation appeared forlorn, and I would willingly have made my escape if I could have done so with a good grace and without a suspicious appearance; but that being impossible, I sat down to the filthy table with a cheerful face, before a cloth, evidently an old servant in the family, and seldom troubled with water.

I now thought that as I could not make them comprehend a word I said, my best chance of dinner was to go out and buy an Italian phrase book. It was a bright idea, and by dint of signs and repetition of the word "libraio" the intelligent chef at last

ordered his scullion to show me the way to a book-seller's.

This was a point gained, and quickly returning with my book of dialogues, I opened it in triumph, when, to my disgust, I discovered that the stupid bookseller, misunderstanding my broken Italian, had given me a selection of dialogues from Molière, Fenelon, &c. &c., on comic, moral, and religious subjects.

Returning to the shop, I at last really obtained what I wanted, and once more I considered myself in safety. Then came the cruellest cut of all. Armed with my battery of phrases, and sallying forth, certain of victory, what were my confusion and dismay at finding the cooks, scullions, and waiters quite as ignorant of Italian as of French, and that I had found my way into a German kitchen.

I could not help laughing at my situation, provoked and hungry as I was, and determined to get through it as well as I could. I set to work once more, and sketched an egg, a chicken, and a mutton-chop, with clever representations of pears, figs, and grapes.

This plan succeeded beyond my hopes. The landlord seemed to understand perfectly, but insisted upon my beginning with a large tureen of vegetable soup, full of grease and garlic. This I manfully resisted, to his great annoyance, but it really was too much for friendship. Next came my mutton-chop, black on one side and red on the other, swimming in bad butter. I made

an attempt towards it, that I might not hurt the cook's feelings, but found it impracticable. With it he brought a plate of parmesan, which I, taking for salt, began to eat with my chop, and thus completely overturned the gravity of the scullions, who, I verily believe, thought me stark mad. A large flask of sour wine took the place of the vinegar, which was the only thing on the table that was sweet.

Having made but a very poor dinner of parmesan cheese and bread and butter, I called out very loud, "Paga, paga!" which the cunning Germans understood well enough, for the spokesman instantly gave me, as he thought, full information on the subject in ten thousand inharmonious words, out of which I did not recognise one; but guessing their substance and object, I put down a five-franc piece, thinking that would cover my expenses, and to my no small astonishment received in change four francs ten sous in silver and five sous in copper, having dined for the sum of five sous. The remaining five I liberally gave the waiter, who, with elegant solemnity, bowed me out.

Nov. 9.—Left Milan at four in the afternoon, having parted company with the Speaker and Mrs. Purves, on account of the difficulty of obtaining horses for so large a party. It was also found absolutely necessary to buy another carriage here, in order to lighten Lord Blessington's heavy family-coach from some of its luggage. Travelling all night, we passed over the

Bochetta, one of the highest Alps, and arrived about nine in the morning at Genoa.

Nov. 10.—At three o'clock we started again, and reached Chiavari to sleep.

Nov. 11.—Much rain had fallen for some days before we reached Genoa, and the floods had carried away several bridges on the route we had to take. Torrents fell as we left Chiavari, by no means propitious for our journey to Spezia, part of the road to that place lying through the bed of a river, which after rains generally became impassable. Away we went, however, along a good road lined with hedges of aloes, with groves of vines, cypresses, and olives—no doubt an enchanting drive in fine weather.

On the way we fell in with Lord Haywarden, who had left Spezia that morning at half-past four. It was five in the evening when we met him, he having accomplished in that time a distance of seven miles.

He advised us by no means to proceed, the more particularly as he had seen a carriage with ladies, which had been sticking in the river for four hours with ten horses to assist them, unable to move. But we were in for it, and go on we must. He wished us well through it, and continued his course.

We had not parted from him five minutes before we arrived at a small stream, so swollen by the floods, that we were obliged to hire about twenty labourers to drag

us through it and push the carriages up to the top of the hill.

Towards evening we reached Borghetto, and found the river bed through which we were to pass a raging torrent.

Here then we must stay till the flood subsides, of which at present there does not seem the slightest probability. Pazienza!

Nov. 12.—Of all the horrible, detestable, unsavoury places that ever were seen this was the worst. The very essence of everything disgusting! The streets filthy to an excess, and the chief part of the inhabitants consisting of large black pigs. The wretched hut, called inn, was almost without furniture, and wholly without sashes to the windows, the apertures through which light was admitted being only made to close with rough wooden shutters.

Four bare walls formed our sitting-room, but without any fastening to the door, so that we were constantly intruded upon by any stray pigs that chanced to be passing by. Here we were forced to take up our abode, while the rain poured in torrents, preventing the possibility of putting our noses out for an instant.

The bed-room was about ten feet square, and contained three beds. This we gave up to Milord, bringing two of the beds into the salle-à-manger, which, in the end, turned out the more comfortable room of the two, for unluckily, the public staircase, leading to the kitchen

above us, was exactly over Lord Blessington's bed, and the tramp was uniformly kept up the whole night, so that he never was allowed to slumber for a moment.

I shall never forget the appearance of his room. It was the acme of misery, and yet with a comic side to it. A small truck-bed in a little alcove at the farther end, over which was the staircase, whose creaking boards completely banished sleep; Lord Blessington, in a large flannel night-cap, with a travelling-shawl over his shoulders, sitting up in bed, with his books and drawings strewed around him, his breakfast by his side, served in the silver accessories of his travelling kit; a poor little rickety table, set out with all the profusion of costly plate and cut-glass bottles of his emptied dressing-case, with brocaded dressing-gowns on the broken-backed chairs, and imperials piled on imperials, almost reaching the ceiling, and actually filling the room. It was a splendid subject for a picture.

I must do him the justice to say he bore his situation manfully. Luckily, the walls of the sitting-room had been recently whitewashed; and as it was impossible to move out on account of the positive inundation, we amused ourselves with exhibiting our pictorial talents, leaving works there that will seldom be equalled. Lord Blessington's genius lay among men and horses, and mine in architecture; and the large frescoes we executed, if they still exist, will attest our industry. I covered one wall with a grand cartoon of the great temple at

Pæstum, and he decorated the other with a life-size portrait of Napoleon on horseback, surrounded by his generals, both fine specimens of the respective masters, and no doubt long the pride of Borghetto.

This evening, as we were sitting in all the pomp of woe, the door opened in an indecisive manner, and in walked an old fat man, half tipsy, very tall and very dirty, and with apparently half the village at his heels, bowing in the most profound manner. We all immediately concluded that it was the parson of the parish come to ask charity, and Lord Blessington had even got his hand in his pocket to act upon the idea, when, after a great deal of hesitation and embarrassment, the old man blundered out as well as he was able, between Italian, French, and Portuguese, apparently understanding neither, that he was the Pope's Nunzio, and only wanted his vetturino's carriage put up in the wretched crazy shed, called our "remise." The thing was quite impossible, as we tried to impress upon him, but he insisted upon its practicability, and would have it that it was only the impertinence of our courier that made the difficulty. When, however, he found that he could not carry his point, he backed himself out of the room, bowing to us in the most obsequious manner, but shaking his fist at the courier, vowing vengeance against him on his arrival at Rome, and explaining that, "at Borghetto he was only a man, but at Rome he was the Pope's Nunzio."

Nov. 13.—A piece of luck this morning put us *en route* once more. The Governor of Genoa by good fortune happened to arrive here from Spezia, and finding that an English peer was detained at this wretched place, sent his compliments to say that the sedan chairs, which had brought him, were at our service, and the inspector of the roads to accompany us and clear away all difficulties. Sir Charles and I went to return him Lord Blessington's thanks, and found him a most charming elegant "old man in regimentals." He received us in the most friendly manner, and afterwards called at our inn. Upon seeing our fresco paintings he assured us that we should not find anything comparable to them throughout Italy, and I feel convinced myself that we never shall.

At twelve o'clock we left Borghetto on horseback, with our luggage in the sedans, the carriages being out of the question, and proceeded along the most diabolical pass that ever was seen, continually wading through torrents, descending and ascending rocks, crossing streams, and the rain pitilessly pelting, without a minute's respite, the whole day.

At Spezia, however, we at last arrived, very wet and hungry, and making a hearty dinner, enjoyed ourselves thoroughly in a very comfortable hotel.

What words can adequately describe the Paradise to which I was introduced at Naples! The Palazzo Belvedere, situated about a mile and a half from the

town on the heights of Vomero, overlooking the city, and the beautiful turquoise-coloured bay dotted with latine sails, with Vesuvius on the left, the island of Capri on the right, and the lovely coast of Sorrento stretched out in front, presented an enchanting scene. The house was the perfection of an Italian palace, with its exquisite frescoes, marble arcades, and succession of terraces one beneath the other, adorned with hanging groves of orange trees and pomegranates, shaking their odours among festoons of vines and luxuriant creepers, affording agreeable shade from the noontide sun, made brighter by the brilliant parterres of glowing flowers, while refreshing fountains plashed in every direction among statues and vases innumerable. I was naturally entranced, and commenced a new existence.

Lady Blessington, then in her zenith, and certainly one of the most beautiful as well as one of the most fascinating women of her time, formed the centre figure in the little family group assembled within its precincts.

Count D'Orsay, then a youth of nineteen, was the next object of attraction, and I have no hesitation in asserting was the beau ideal of manly dignity and grace. He had not yet assumed the marked peculiarities of dress and deportment which the sophistications of London life subsequently developed. He was the model of all that could be conceived of noble demeanour and youthful candour; handsome beyond all question; accomplished to the last degree; highly educated, and

of great literary acquirements; with a gaiety of heart and cheerfulness of mind that spread happiness on all around him. His conversation was brilliant and engaging, as well as clever and instructive. He was, moreover, the best fencer, dancer, swimmer, runner, dresser; the best shot, the best horseman, the best draughtsman of his age. Possessed of every attribute that could render his society desirable, I am sure I do not go too far in pronouncing him the perfection of a youthful nobleman.

Then came Miss Power, Lady Blessington's younger sister, somewhat demure in aspect, of quiet and retiring manners, contrasting sweetly with the more dazzling qualities which sparkled around her. Lady Blessington has been described as a peach blossom, and Miss Power as a primrose by her side.

This formed the family party, and I soon found it as fully devoted to mental cultivation and the prosecution of literary pursuits, as to the more natural occupations of pleasure and enjoyment.

The house was the rendezvous of all the literati of the place, and the point of attraction of all the English visitors of distinction who were so frequently passing through it. Sir William Gell, Dr. Millingen (the celebrated numismatist), the Abbé Campbell, Keppel Craven, Mathias (the author of the "Pursuits of Literature," and whose Italian poetry was distinguished for its elegance and purity), Sir William Drummond, Lord Byron, were residents in the neighbourhood, and

with them the *élite* of Italian society, the wits and learned men in every department, made the Palazzo Belvedere the centre of intellectual association.

In one corner of the large saloon stood Lady Blessington's table, laden with books and writings; Count D'Orsay's in another, equally adorned with literary and artistic litter. Miss Power's and mine completed the arrangement, while Lord Blessington strolled and chatted from one to the other, and then dived into his own sanctum, where he divided his time between fresh architectural schemes for his castle in the air, and the novel of "De Vavasour," on which he was busily engaged.

In this agreeable company I visited all the antiquities and classical sites with which the neighbourhood abounds, and no means were neglected to make these visits profitable. The day before their execution every authority, ancient and modern, that could throw a light upon the subject, was consulted, and notes collected to illustrate the object of inquiry. Sir William Gell was our sheet-anchor on these occasions, who knew every nook and corner by heart, with its associations and traditions; and the knowledge and instruction derived from this mode of practical study was complete.

In the cool of the evenings we all repaired to a charming loggia overlooking the bay, and here a succession of amusements, springing out of the fun and fancy of the moment, passed away the moonlight hours.

Visitors poured in in endless variety, and the charms of music and playful wit were brought into action.

I had soon picked up many imitations of Neapolitan manners and peculiarities, and gave frequent dressed representations of the characters I had collected, while not a week passed but I had added one or two Neapolitan songs, which given in the grotesque dialect of the peasantry, and with guitar accompaniment, were always welcome contributions.

One of the most popular personages among the many out-of-door candidates for favour was a little old fellow, who used to station himself on the Mole every afternoon, reciting and expounding the beauties of Ariosto in the Neapolitan dialect to an entranced crowd of fishermen and lazzaroni, who sat upon the ground and on baskets and benches in a circle round him, perfectly enthralled with the romantic adventures of Rinaldo, and other knights errant and persecuted damsels conjured up by the poet. This was one of my most successful assumptions, and was frequently "redemanded."

Another remarkable character was a priest, who at the corner of the Piazza del Castello preached, not only to the populace but to the better classes, in the impassioned style peculiar to his nation; not in the Neapolitan dialect, but in the purity of the Italian language, and with the polished eloquence of inspired oratory; employing all the dramatic resources of passionate gesture and powerful

facial expression, displayed by these masters of declamation, in their endeavour to enchain the hearts and minds of their auditors.

I had a correct dress made, and with the long streaming black hair and small square cap, I managed to present a close copy of the original; while, aided by a real and most exciting sermon which I actually heard him preach, I produced a marvellous impression, especially on my Italian auditors, who listened to it seriously, regarding it simply as a specimen of fine oratory, and not for a moment receiving it as an exposition of the outrageous exaggeration and unworthy pantomimical effect it was meant to expose.

Many years afterwards, long before I dreamt of going upon the stage, old Jack Bannister, on hearing this sermon, declared that "tragedy was evidently my forte." I don't think he was right; if he was, I have still to find it out. Who knows but I may have a fine future before me yet!

During the twelvemonth I remained a guest at the Palazzo Belvedere, I rummaged every corner of Naples and its environs, wandered on foot among the mountains with my sketch-book, and lived among the peasants, joining in their pursuits, dancing the Tarantella under vine-covered pergolas by moonlight, and picking up songs and stories in abundance.

No one who has not witnessed it can form a notion of the gaiety and inspiring mirth of the Tarantella.

Begun sometimes in the early morning of a festa by one couple of dancers, male and female, and relieved by others, who take their places when the first pair are tired out, and so on without remission till after night-fall. The dance is accompanied by guitar, castanet, and songs improvised for the occasion, the singers relieving each other, like the dancers, when tired or exhausted in invention, fresh candidates supplying fresh words of their own to the same air in endless variety, amidst the shouts and applause of the assembled multitude.

Ah! those were halcyon days, never to be forgotten. I seem to live them over again, while recording them; and all the trivial incidents connected with them present themselves to my mind, after fifty years, as vividly as at the moment they happened.

Lord Blessington was very susceptible of cold, and had a horror of a "thorough draught." He was able, D'Orsay used to declare, to detect a current of air caused by the key being left crossways in the keyhole of a door.

On one of our exploring expeditions, we were examining the ruins of some old Roman villas at Baiæ. The foundations extended for some distance into the bay, and the remaining portions of the walls, intersecting each other, rose about two or three feet above the level of the water. As I skipped backwards and forwards over the broken remains, Lord Blessington more than

once called out, to my great surprise, "Take care, take care! For heaven's sake mind what you are about; you'll be in the water to a certainty!" exhibiting a degree of solicitude quite unlike his usual inappreciation of danger, either to himself or others. After one or two repetitions of his alarm, Lady Blessington, losing patience, exclaimed: "Do let the boy alone, Blessington. If he does fall in the water, what can it signify? you know he swims like a fish."

"Yes, yes," said his lordship, "that's all very well, but I shall catch my death driving home in the carriage with him."

Among the many valuable acquaintances I made at Naples, one of the most important to me was that of Samuel Angell, the accomplished architect, who was then on a professional tour. He had just returned from Sicily, where, with his friend Harris, he had been fortunate enough to discover some very interesting sculptures while excavating at Girgenti.

With him and a most amusing literary companion, Mr. Atkinson, whom he called his "historian," I spent three weeks at Pompeii, drawing and measuring everything of interest—a most agreeable and profitable sojourn. There was then no "Hotel Diomede" on the spot, and the nearest place we could find to take up our quarters was above a mile off, at a wretched "locanda" or rather "osteria," at Torre dell Annunziata. A walk through cotton fields every morning brought us by break of day

to Pompeii, where we fully employed our time till Ave Maria; eating the dinner we took with us under the convenient shelter of some ruined arch, and walking back at dusk to our frugal supper and early bed.

One little insignificant thing in the midst of the wonders of this wonderful place has always remained in my memory. It has been generally passed over, probably unnoticed by many, at any rate I have never heard anyone allude to it. On the walls of the corridor leading to the principal entrance to the amphitheatre—the "pit-door," as we should call it—were all sorts of names and words, the rough sketch of a soldier and other fancies, scratched with nails or knives by the people waiting for admission. I don't know why this should have made such an impression on me, but it seemed to take me among the people of two thousand years ago, scribbling their names and those of their sweethearts, for all the world like the pittites of the present day at Astley's or the Victoria.

Another pilgrimage with my friend Angell and our indispensable "historian" was to Pæstum, where we remained a week or ten days, studying and measuring the magnificent temples. If the "locanda" at Torre dell Annunziata was a wretched abode, what was our habitation here? The solitary house of the place—a hovel without glass to the windows, through which the smoke from the kitchen escaped, and with nothing to eat but musty maccaroni with rancid "caggia cavallo" (a horrible cheese made from goats' milk), the "pièce

de résistance" being what was called a "frittura," but what it was made of it was impossible to discover; it might have been anything, but at all events was better than nothing, for we managed to exist upon it, washed down as it was with a delicious bottle of ink, called the "Vino di Paese." The meal would not have suited the Sybarites who once peopled the locality, but what then? We were young and enthusiastic, and enjoyed ourselves more than we have frequently done since at The Star and Garter at Richmond, or The Trafalgar at Greenwich.

I paid a second visit to Pæstum shortly afterwards in very different style, with the Blessingtons and Lord Morpeth (the late Lord Carlisle), who was one of the most amiable and agreeable guests we had during my residence at the Palazzo Belvedere. This was a delightful excursion in every way. Lord Morpeth had written a prize poem upon the ruins of Pæstum, and there, on the spot, after a sumptuous lunch in the Temple of Neptune, we had the pleasure of hearing him recite it amidst the glorious ruins it celebrated.

In his company we also visited Capua, Beneventum, Caserta, and other places of interest, and profited greatly by his society everywhere.

Lady Blessington, in her Italian diary, thus alludes to the trip: "We returned to Salerno; the strangers who joined our party at Pæstum being no less delighted than surprised by the extraordinary facility or felicity with which Mr. Charles Mathews personated different

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mendicants who had assailed us for alms on our route in the morning, and of whom he gave such perfect imitations in the evening, that some of the party who had previously bestowed their charity reproached the supposed beggar for again demanding it on the same day."

Out of the many distinguished people it was my good fortune to be associated with, there were three who were my especial favourites, and with whom I kept up constant companionship—the ever genial Dr. Quin,* who, up to this day, more than fifty years (but what are fifty years to either of us!) has preserved his faculty of imparting cheerfulness to all his friends by his inexhaustible flow of fun and good humour, while by his skill and science he has alleviated their bodily sufferings; the witty, lively Dr. Madden, at that time as full of animal spirits as of mental acquirements, and who was my fidus Achates upon all occasions; and dear old, kind, gay Sir William Gell, who while wheeling himself about the room in his chair, for he was unable to walk a step without help, alternately kept his friends on the broad grin with his whimsical sallies and droll anecdotes, and instructed them from the stores of his wonderful archæological knowledge and practical experience, always as pleased and ready to impart his instructive information as they were to receive it—at one moment playing on a rough Greek double flute to his dog (who was an

* Dr. Quin survived Mathews only a few months, and died in November, 1878.

accomplished singer) with as much gravity as if really accompanying a celebrated virtuoso, and the next turning over his endless portfolios, and illustrating their treasures by *viva voce* comments. His talent for rapid sketching was remarkable, and the accuracy with which he could put upon paper from memory anything he had casually seen was most extraordinary, his drawings bearing minute comparison afterwards with the objects themselves. I have a rough sketch of his from memory, while describing the strange bas-reliefs discovered by Angell and Harris at Girgenti, which he had only seen once for a few moments, as perfect as if carefully drawn with the sculptures before him. His hand was as big as a leg of mutton and covered with chalkstones, and yet he could handle a pencil or a reed-pen with the greatest delicacy and precision. His elegant work on Pompeii was the first, and has remained the best that has been published.

Gigi Pereira, only son of Count Giuseppe Pereira, was a young Sicilian, and one of the handsomest men I ever saw. He was, I believe, a cousin of Prince Butera and Prince Lardaria. His father was immensely rich, had long resided in England, and had sent his son to Eton. He was a wild youth, and squandered his father's money in every conceivable way, and at the death of the old count ran through the fortune he had inherited in an incredible short space of time. After losing thousands upon English race-courses,

he had finished up his career at rouge-et-noir and roulette, and had returned to his native Sicily without a sou. When I first met him at Naples, he was as full of fun and frolic as if he had just won a fortune instead of lost one, and talked about his escapades with the greatest gusto. Over the gate of his palazzo, two miles from Palermo, he had inscribed in gold letters the celebrated despatch of François I.: "*Tout est perdu fors l'honneur.*" I suggested that a more appropriate inscription under the circumstances would be, "*Rien ne va plus,*" which alteration he swore he would adopt, and was quite capable of doing. He told me that on his last day at Epsom he had lost an awful sum to an American, and confessed to him candidly that he could not pay. The American of course thought he was joking, but replied seriously: "Oh, you can't pay, can't you? Well, we shall see. But I tell you this—if you present yourself at Tattersall's on Monday without the money I shoot you at sight. What do you say to that?" "Nothing," said Gigi; "but that it would be more convenient to me if, instead of at sight, you could make it at three or six months."

Nearly fifty years later I read this reply quoted in a letter to a London paper as having just been made in Paris. As Puff says: "Two people happened to think of the same thing, only Gigi, like Shakespeare, used it first."

Dr. Madden, in his "Life of Lady Blessington,"

refers to our acquaintance in such flattering language that I cannot resist the temptation of inserting it here. In courts of justice, evidence to character is always received, and I don't know why I should debar myself from the criminal's privilege :

"When I made the acquaintance of Charles Mathews, at Naples, he was scarcely twenty years of age. He sketched admirably, made a study of his profession, was full of humour, vivacity, and drollery, but gentlemanlike withal ; marvellously mercurial, always in motion, and his mind ever as actively engaged as his body. But, with all his buoyancy of spirits, and in the very height of his drollery and merriment in the society of Belvedere Palace, where all the *élite* of foreign society were wont to congregate, he never forgot himself for a moment, or, by the extraordinary vivacity of his humour, his sudden sallies of sportiveness—in the way of epigrams, impromptus, witticisms, all sorts of grotesque antics, and ridiculous pranks and gambols—gave offence to any human being. He was certainly one of the most steady, well-conducted, sprightly persons of his age, one of the most innocently amusing and legitimately entertaining young men in society I ever met with. His talents as a draughtsman were far above mediocrity. In architectural drawings he excelled. A sketch of his, of the exterior of the Belvedere Palace, displaying the colonnade and verandah of the front facing the Bay of Naples, possesses considerable merit and interest for all

acquainted with the place and the people who gave celebrity to it. He displayed peculiar cleverness in catching the salient points and *outré* characteristics of remarkable Neapolitan personages who figured in the courts, as story-tellers on the Molo, as Policinello in the Theatre of San Carlino, as cantatrici on the boards of San Carlo, and as street preachers, holding forth in the evening, on stools and rickety tables, to the lazzaroni, on the pier at Naples. Of his talent for composing *vers de société*, burlesque poetry, and epigrams, the frequenters of the Villa Belvedere, in 1824 and 1825, must have a lively recollection. Special specimens of these were given me in the former year, in Naples, by Mr. Mathews. In that year an occurrence took place, of an unpleasant nature, between Mathews and D'Orsay, which was attended with some grave results. I will only observe, in reference to the subject, that I consented to interfere in this misunderstanding, with a determination, if possible, to bring it to a peaceful issue, and that I contemplated then the possibility of another result to a misunderstanding, that became a subject of such an explanation, very differently to the way in which I now regard it; believing, as I do now, that the last recourse to pistols or swords in a controversy between parties who disagree in their opinions of one another, and give expression to their opinions inconsiderately, and angrily, and offensively, for the vindication of their sentiments, or from an apprehension of what others may think of them, is neither an

evidence of the highest wisdom, the truest courage, nor the firmest belief in Christianity itself."

The "occurrence of an unpleasant nature" between D'Orsay and myself to which Dr. Madden alludes, was the only cloud that darkened the bright period of my visit. It was a summer storm, and cleared the air, not only for the moment, but for ever after. It was occasioned by one of those unaccountable outbreaks that defy explanation; so unlike anything that I had ever seen before, and which I never saw repeated, that I can only look back upon it as a bit of temporary madness.

Count D'Orsay and I had been, from the first moment of our acquaintance, I may say without exaggeration, bosom friends. We were about the same age, and our daily occupations were in common. Fencing, pistol-shooting, swimming, riding, drawing, reading, all were shared together. It is true that in everything I felt myself more like his pupil than his equal; but this modesty on my side never for a moment drew from him the slightest manifestation of the superiority he could not but be aware that he possessed. Our good understanding, however, was doomed to be interrupted, and though happily only for a time, for the time matters were made excessively disagreeable.

One morning, after breakfast, Lord Blessington proposed a sail to Castellamare in the *Bolivar*, a yacht he had bought from Lord Byron, and of which he was very proud. Now the fact was that these perpetual sailings

bored us all dreadfully—Lord Blessington, I verily believe, as much as anyone else; at any rate, he never seemed to relish the sport without company, and, like many yachting men, would put up, *faute de mieux*, with companions on board that he would not tolerate for five minutes on shore.

It was an awfully hot day, with scarcely a breath of wind; and though his "skipper," the enthusiastic Captain Smith, assured us that we should have a delightful run across the bay, we had no faith. As a "delightful run across the bay" had more than once resulted in our being becalmed for three or four hours on our return, leaving us half dead with heat and *ennui*, the proposition was not met with the alacrity it merited. The ladies were "afraid of the heat," and D'Orsay simply declined the infliction, so his lordship retired to his room in high dudgeon, but not to be deterred from his day's yachting.

Greatly put out by the objection of Lady Blessington and her sister to accompany him, and by D'Orsay's flat refusal to be bored out of his life, he fell back upon my society as a *dernier ressort*. But even I unfortunately was ready with an excuse—had a sketch, which I was very anxious to make, and, unless he absolutely desired it, had rather not lose the opportunity.

"As you please," said he. "I only hope you will really carry out your intention; for even your friend Count D'Orsay says that you carry your sketch-book

with you everywhere, but that you never bring back anything in it."

Piqued at this remark, I turned on my heel and made no reply, leaving his lordship to his day's sail alone.

In the afternoon the rest of the party started for a drive. We were all four a little glum, I fancied, on the occasion, and I have since surmised that Lady Blessington had been lecturing D'Orsay for his selfishness and want of courtesy in not acceding to Lord Blessington's wishes. For this, or some other reason, he was evidently out of humour, and we drove on for some time in silence. At last, at an unlucky moment, and probably with too great a degree of bitterness, for I was still smarting under the injustice of the accusation which had been brought against me, I broke ground:

"I have to thank you, Count D'Orsay, for the high character you have given me to Lord Blessington, with regard to my diligence."

"Comment!" said the Count.

I saw the fire flashing in his eyes, and changed my tone: "I should have been more gratified had you mentioned to me, instead of to his lordship, anything you might have——"

"Vous êtes un mauvais blagueur, par Dieu, la plus grande bête et blagueur que j'ai jamais rencontré, et la première fois que vous me parlez comme ça, je vous casserai la tête et je vous jetterai par la fenêtre."

Such words as these, before two ladies and the servants, I did not conceive were answerable, and remained silent. Lady Blessington, in order to end the affair, said: "Count D'Orsay, I beg you to remember I am present, and that such language is not exactly what I should have expected before me."

"Pardieu," said the Count, and, I regret to say, proceeded to lengths in reply to her ladyship passing all I had believed possible. After walking in the garden with Lady Blessington a short time, we entered the house, and each retired to his own room. In my room I received the following note from the Count:

"Si vous aviez une idée du monde, vous sauriez qu'il est indispensable d'y connoître sa place; ainsi donc c'est une chose qu'avant tout vous devriez apprendre. Vous vous éviteriez par ce moyen la peine d'apprendre que l'amitié qu'on a pour vous n'est pas une excuse pour prendre un ton qu'on est obligé de rabaisser, surtout lorsqu'il s'adresse à une personne qui n'oublie pas ce qu'il est.

"Avec un ton comme il faut vous eussiez appris qu'en conversation avec milady devant milord, nous fimes l'observation que vous aviez laissé échapper l'occasion de faire des esquisses à Caprée, et qui plus est, qu'il étoit dommage que vous ne pratiquiez pas davantage le dessin. Si dans ces mots vous trouvez de quoi être offensé, je ne m'y connais plus, et comme ces mots

n'avoient été dits qu'en conversation par milady à moi, j'étois loin de penser que vous en seriez fâché. Au surplus, sur aucun point, vous n'avez le droit de prendre un air d'arrogance en me reprochant mes paroles sur un ton inconvenant. Vous m'avez mis dans la cruelle nécessité de vous remettre trop fortement à votre place, mais vous auriez tout évité, en sachant à qui vous parliez."*

This note I thought best to leave unanswered till the morning, fearing that I might, from the feeling of the moment, act against my sober judgment. In the morning I despatched the note in answer, which I received back again enclosed in an envelope, with the letter that follows mine.

CHARLES J. MATHEWS TO COUNT D'ORSAY.*

"1er Août, 1824.

"MONSIEUR LE COMTE,

"J'ai dormi et réfléchi sur votre lettre et sur les paroles dont vous m'avez honoré hier, et comme il me semble que ni la noblesse ni la force supérieure vous donne le droit de m'insulter aussi fortement devant des dames, et surtout devant des domestiques, j'espère que vous ne me refuserez pas la satisfaction que je me trouve forcé à vous demander.

"Monsieur le Comte, j'ai l'honneur d'être,

"Votre serviteur,

"C. J. M."

* See Appendix.

COUNT D'ORSAY TO CHARLES J. MATHEWS.*

"Votre lettre prouve encore le peu de connoissance que vous avez du monde, car vous saurez qu'on ne finit pas une lettre sur un ton aussi léger, et comme j'espère que toute cette querelle sera bonne à quelque chose, profitez déjà de cet avis.

"Pour la satisfaction que vous désirez, je vous la donnerai tant qu'il vous plaira. Designez le lieu, les armes, enfin tout ce que vous croirez le plus convenable à votre satisfaction personnelle. Je vous renvoie votre lettre parcequ'elle n'est pas sur un ton qui m'engage à la garder.

"J'ai l'honneur de vous saluer,

"CTE. D'ORSAY."

I immediately set off for Naples on receipt of this letter, to the house of Mr. Madden, who promised, before I made known the affair, or mentioned any names, to act as my second on the occasion. I then stated the circumstances, and he advised me, in order that nothing might be suspected by the rest of the family, to return to Belvedere, while he conducted the business. On arriving, I found this precaution useless, for, in my absence, Count D'Orsay had written to Lord B. to ask him to become his second. This Lord B. informed me of, saying, of course, that he could have

* See Appendix.

nothing of the sort to do with two of his guests, and all he could feel was sorrow that the occurrence should have taken place. Finding the object of my return frustrated, and thinking it not quite agreeable to sit at table with the Count, I determined to stay in town till the affair was concluded. Almost as soon as I got there, I received the following note from Lord Blessington :

"Sunday.

"My dear Mathews,

"I considered it proper to state to Count D'Orsay, that I could not take any part in the very disagreeable affair that has taken place, except that of a mediator. I assured Count D'Orsay that you had no intention of speaking to him in an improper tone, or questioning him in an impetuous or disrespectful manner. The Count had imagined the contrary, and meant to express that if you did not change your tone towards him, that he would have recourse to violence ; for the use of any words beyond the expression of such intentions he says as follows : 'Si j'ai employé plus de paroles qu'il étoit suffisant pour. lui exprimer mes intentions j'en suis faché.' The Count says also : 'Je n'ai pas eu l'idée de le rebaisser dans ses propres yeux.' The Count acknowledges to me his regret for the quarrel and the violence of his temper. That violence has not yet sufficiently subsided to make him perceive fully to what improper lengths his violence has carried him ; but as you declared to me that you had no

intention of speaking improperly, and the Count declares he spoke from misconception, and is sorry for language used in anger, and without intention of lowering you in your personal esteem, I should wish you to speak further on the subject to your friend before you take any steps which must make the breach wider. Having consulted Mr. Madden, I am sure he will give you the best advice, and you can this evening let me know his sentiments.

"I cannot conclude without repeating that you were highly to blame in speaking on the subject at all, however deeply I regret the consequences that have arisen from your ill-timed and injudicious appeal.

"I wish I had sufficient influence over the Count to persuade him to say everything consoling to you, but his having denied the intention of wounding your feelings must be so far satisfactory, and 'evil words hurt only the speaker.'

"Believe me, yours very sincerely,

"BLESSINGTON.

"Excuse the haste of this scrawl; you may guess why I hasten it."

Having handed this letter over to Madden, he told me that the note was all very well for Lord Blessington to write, but that he could not receive it as anything regular from the Count, and that he did not consider my honour would be satisfied by it; as therefore, he did

not imagine that it at all interfered with a letter he had written to the Count, he despatched the following instantly to him :

R. R. MADDEN TO COUNT D'ORSAY.

"Naples, August, 1824.

"MONSIEUR LE COMTE,

"On a subject of importance, I can hardly trust to my bad French ; I therefore have recourse to the only language I can distinctly make myself understood in.

"If I felt less embarrassed in addressing you on the subject of a late unhappy misunderstanding between you and Mr. Mathews, I should hope to be able to convince you that the character of an officious man cannot be more disagreeable in your eyes than it is in mine, and that I have undertaken the office of mediator on the present occasion (though not without reluctance) not less from my friendship for Mr. M. than from my high respect for you. I should have done so indeed, even had I not stood committed to Mr. M. by promise, before I was acquainted with the name of his antagonist, when I considered that the *exposé* to a stranger of this misunderstanding might be prevented by the interference of a mutual acquaintance.

"Pardon me, Monsieur le Comte, if I presume to offer a few words in the way of counsel and observation.

I have too high an opinion of your understanding to fear you will be offended by receiving them when honestly given, even from an humbler individual than myself.

"I can very well conceive some momentary annoyance (the cause of which might not be apparent to Mr. M.) extorting from you those expressions, which no gentleman should hear in the presence of a lady, although, in a cooler moment, in all probability, by you forgotten or regretted. I can very well understand, in your observation about Mr. M.'s neglect with respect to drawing, &c., the friendliness of your intentions, but permit me to add, if what followed had been suppressed, the feelings of Mr. M. had been spared a severe trial.

"Depend upon it, Monsieur le Comte, that persons of inferior rank are ever tremblingly alive even to an imaginary slight or insult from a superior; and when you reflect that the epithets that stand for limits of separation between *noble* and *plebeian* are but arbitrary distinctions between man and man, you will best consult the nobility of your nature by practising the honourable condescension of a brave man, by making a trifling atonement for a hasty injury.

"It is with a full knowledge of your manly spirit that I demand an acknowledgment, on the part of Mr. M., of your having been betrayed by anger into those hasty expressions, which only those who do not

know you could think of attributing to intentional incivility.

"I have the honour to be, Monsieur le Comte, with the highest respect,

"Your obedient, humble Servant,

"R. R. MADDEN."

Madden's letter I thought very coolly written, and if anything could bring the Count to a sense of his being wrong, it was *that*; though, to own the truth, I considered him of so hot and violent a temper, and so accustomed to swords and pistols from his quarrels in his regiment, that I was perfectly prepared for the event. In the evening came his answer, as follows:

"MON CHER MR. MADDEN,

"Je suis très loin d'être fâché que Mr. Mathews vous ait choisi pour son témoin, ma seule crainte eut été qu'il en choisît un autre.

"Je suis aussi très loin d'être offensé d'un de vos avis. Lorsque j'estime quelqu'un, son opinion est toujours bien reçue.

"L'affaire, comme vous savez, est très simple dans le principe. On me fit la question si Mathews avait dessiné à Caprée; je dis que non, mais qu'il emportoit toujours ses crayons et son album pour ne rien faire—que cela étoit dommage avec ses grandes dispositions. Lord Blessington n'a pas eu le courage de lui représenter sans

y mêler mon nom, et Mathews a pris la chose avec moi sur un ton si haut que j'ai été obligé de le rabaisser, après lui avoir exprimé que ce n'étoit que par intérêt pour lui que j'avois fait cette représentation. Il a continué sur le même ton ; je lui dis alors que la première fois qu'il prendroit un ton semblable avec moi je le jetterois hors de la voiture et lui casserois la tête. Je vous répète mot pour mot cette altercation. La seule différence que j'ai fait entre lui et un autre, c'est que je n'ai fait que dire, ce que j'aurois fait certainement vis-à-vis d'un autre qui prendroit ce ton avec moi. Si j'ai accompagné mon projet d'avenir de mots offensants et inconvenants, j'en suis aussi fâché pour lui que pour moi, car c'est me manquer à moi-même que d'user des mots trop violents.

"Pour votre observation sur la différence des rangs, elle est inutile, car jamais je n'attache d'importance au rang qui se trouve souvent compromis par tant de bêtes. Je juge les personnes pour ce qu'elles sont, sans m'informer que c'étoient leurs ancêtres, et si mon supérieur eut employé la même manière de me reprocher qu'a pris Mathews, j'aurois sûrement fait ce que je n'ai fait que dire à Mathews, qui j'aime beaucoup trop pour le rabaisser à ses propres yeux. Il seroit ridicule à moi de ne pas avouer que j'ai tort de lui avoir dit des paroles trop fortes, mais en même temps je ne veux pas nier mes paroles, c'est-à-dire, mon projet de voiture, &c. Si Mathews veut satisfaction, je lui donnerai

tant qu'il lui plaira, tout en lui sachant bon gré de vous avoir choisi pour son témoin.

"Cette affaire est aussi désagréable pour vous que pour nous tous, mais au moins elle n'altérera pas l'amitié de votre tout dévoué,

"CTE. D'ORSAY." *

This cleverly worded note Madden handed to me, and I returned it to him without a word. I was determined that I would leave everything to Madden, who I was convinced would not compromise me in any way. When he had read it again, he wrote a fitting answer to the Count, the copy of which has been lost.

In the evening, Madden advised me to return to the Belvedere, and give my hand to Count D'Orsay. After thanking him for his friendship I went home, but finding the letter had not been delivered then, I waited in my room till twelve o'clock, when, seeing that there was no chance of the Count's getting it till morning, I went to bed.

Next morning I went as usual to the drawing-room, and, in a few minutes, the Count came in. I rose and gave him my hand, which he received very cordially, and said: "J'espère, mon cher Mathews, que vous êtes satisfait. Je suis bien fâché pour ce que je vous ai dit, mais j'étais en colère et——" "Mon cher Comte," said I, "n'en parlons plus, je vous en prie, je

* See Appendix.

l'ai tout-à-fait oublié." He then put his arm round my neck, and I felt as happy at the noble manner in which he acknowledged his fault, as at the reconciliation.

The morning of the 4th of August having gone on as usual, I entered the drawing-room, where Lady B. was lying on the sofa very unwell. Miss Power was there and Count D'Orsay near her. As I entered, I perceived the Count in tears, and as I approached, he said to me: "Mon cher Mathews, je vous demande encore bien pardon, devant milady, pour ce que je vous ai dit l'autre jour, et je vous prie seulement une chose, c'est que vous l'oublierez tout-à-fait. Vous me le promettez, n'est ce pas?" I was quite affected at his manner, and assured him over and over again, that it had long been banished from my thoughts.

Thus ended this unhappy business, for which no one could be more sorry than myself, though I am quite convinced that Count D'Orsay, whenever he reflected upon it, will have perfectly exculpated me from the charge of having taken one step beyond what was necessary, or what he would himself have done under similar circumstances.

CHAPTER V.

CORRESPONDENCE, 1823-1824.

THE EARL OF BLESSINGTON TO CHARLES MATHEWS.

"Palazzo Belvedere, Vomero, Dec. 22, 1823.

"MY DEAR MATHEWS,

"Short life to this dirty day, although it is the shortest, for it is a dirty day, and we had twins, resembling it, *i.e.* one day after the other, translated for the benefit of Mrs. M., who has not been in Ireland.

"Firstly, I must mention that I promised to write for Charles until his return, and indisposition as well as the necessity of answering Irish letters prevented my doing so by Friday's post.

"I have, however, taken advantage of a letter to the Duc de Guiche and begged him to forward yours through the Count de Polignac, ambassador in London.

"Secondly, I must acknowledge the pleasure I received from reading your amusing, travelled letter.

"Having said thus much it behoves me, dramatic sir, to give you some account of the youth you consigned to my care. His health has, generally speaking, been

extremely good. He had a slight attack at Milan after partaking of the Devil's Ragout, dressed by a German mixer of eatables.

"He had another slight attack here, but went to bed when we went to dinner, but returned to the charge when he heard we were going to supper. That short attack I attributed to his bad living while at Pompeii, so that his mother may be satisfied that his general health is improving. Of his employ at Pompeii he has informed you, and he is now at Pæstum with the same party. We have had some bad weather since he left us, but as he has probably established his head quarters at Salerno, he can go on with his architectural operations. I am very sure he will one day be very eminent. His drawing is beautiful, and he is extremely accurate.

"I think from his appearance and manners that he has been very happy both on the road and since his arrival. Our compañion, Sir Charles Sutton, who is now at Malta, has taken a strong liking to him, and Count D'Orsay says he is an amiable *garçon*.

"There is only one thing which has occurred since our arrival which would throw a gloom over his visions, and which I therefore have not informed him of.

"I discovered that Lady B. did not like our plan, and so without arguing the topic I determined upon abandoning it. Knowing also how difficult if not impossible it is to do anything which everybody likes, I de-

termined to make a residence out of my present cottage which everybody dislikes.

"Foreseeing this impediment before my departure, I gave orders to build two rooms with three over them, in which I paid no attention to architectural decoration, and next year I shall pull down the remaining part of the thatch and stick up some more rooms. Now I know this will not please either my wife or Mr. Norman, nor your son, but I am encouraged in it by considering that I have laid out on the cottage several thousand pounds, that I have there between built and building nineteen rooms and a stable, dairies, larders, &c. I do not say anything to Charles, for sufficient to the day is the evil thereof, and when he sees what I have done and what I mean to do and will take a share in the last dying stroke, I am at his service. Keep this unto yourself. The balance to Charles must be that he has seen Ireland and out of Ireland rose France and Italy, nay more, for his wishes of not returning until a later period than May will be realised, for after leaving Rome we purpose visiting Sicily, Malta, the Ionian Isles, Venice, the Tyrol, the Rhine, Brussels, and home. I really think it will be of the greatest service to him, for he has an inquiring mind, and after all there is nothing so useful as leaving home when the mind is imbued with virtuous principles. This is happily for him his case, and with virtue for the basis, and honour and gentlemanly feelings to direct and aid talent, he has also, which is a blessing to you both,

the most sincere love, admiration, and regard for his mother and you.

"When you are in low spirits think of that and it will revive you. Think also that he is with those who cherish for you both the sincerest friendship, esteem, and regard. With Lady B's. affectionate regards to Mrs. M., add mine in the warmest and most respectful manner.

"I remain, your sincere Friend,

"BLESSINGTON.

"C. M. is making very great progress in Italian, is very tractable, attentive to good manners, obliging, good-humoured, cheerful, and amusing."

CHARLES J. MATHEWS TO MRS. MATHEWS.

"Belvedere, January 16th, 1824.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,

"Your few lines enclosed in Lady Blessington's letter arrived on Friday last, our twelfth day, and gave me fresh spirits for the whole evening, and also to our dear friends. The night went off much better than I could have expected, considering that there was no previous arrangement. Lady Blessington was dressed as an old lady in an embroidered silk gown, a cap, and a quantity of curls in front, powdered. I never in my life saw anything so perfectly beautiful. I would have given a hundred pounds for you to have

seen her. You never saw such a darling as she was, altogether. Miss Power was dressed in a pair of my white trousers, buff waistcoat, and blue frock coat, with beard, mustachoes, royal, eyebrows made with cork, and was introduced as a young Spanish gentleman. Her appearance was quite complete. I was disguised as a nice old doctor, in imitation of my father's head in 'Old Pillage,' bald and powdered, with black net breeches, white silk stockings, and large buckles. I never did anything so well to my own fancy; I sang 'One Hundred Years Ago,' and a little extempore song in character which had great effect. Next as a quaker with song, and lastly, as a sailor with black face and hands, and powdered hair and eyebrows. You never saw so good a figure. Altogether, we never passed a more agreeable evening. . . . I still am, my dear mother,

"Your most affectionate Son,

"C. J. MATHEWS."

CHARLES J. MATHEWS TO MRS. MATHEWS.

"Belvedere, January 22nd, 1824.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,

"I have received all your welcome letters up to December 12th, from Barham, which arrived yesterday, and gave me great pleasure to hear of my father's success. I was a long time unsettled on account of not getting them; but now I am under a regular range of

fire, receiving them without fail every week. I am afraid that during the last month mine have not been quite so exact; but circumstances so occurred that it was quite impossible to avoid it, being unable to send anything from Pompeii or Pæstum; indeed, the possibility of writing or of doing anything else was totally precluded at the latter place, for I suppose no poor victims ever underwent what we did there. When we arrived, after visiting the most magnificent and imposing remains in the world, we began to look about for quarters, and, finding that the nearest villages were three, six, and twelve miles off—which would have been a very inconvenient distance for us who wished to be always on the spot—we examined the few huts that are erected near the temples, one of which is dignified by the name of locanda, or inn, but immediately pronounced them all impossible. We then proceeded up the mountains to Capeccio, the nearest village, but found it nearly as wretched as the huts below. We learnt, however, that there was here a rich Franciscan convent, where the be-beds were go-good and the monks li-live well, but upon stating our case and requesting permission to be received there for a week we were positively refused. 'Why,' said I to the dirty bald-pated superior, 'we were allowed rooms at the Benedictine convent at Ca-a, without any difficulty!' 'Ay,' said he in return, 'the Benedictines are fools enough to practise charity, we don't.' Thus buffeted about

we were obliged to turn to the miserable locanda below, and spent a week there as agreeably as it is possible to be conceived, though in this instance it is much easier to be described. Our room was about ten feet square, whitewashed, without glass or shutters to the large holes that served at the same time for windows and chimneys, the smoke having no other mode of escape than through our sitting-room. The door had no fastening whatever, so that we were continually intruded upon during our meals by the large black pigs and young buffaloes who formed part of the family circle in the adjoining chamber. Our delicate fare consisted of pig baked with the bristles on, buffaloes' hearts, and cheese made from their milk, with occasionally a starved tough old cock filled with garlic and fennel, and surrounded by boiled chestnuts; wine *sourrer* than *vinaigre*, and water, which assists in causing the malaria at Pæstum, or Pest-o, as the Italians more properly pronounce it; some black beans boiled by way of coffee, and of which they are very fond, with some disgustingly-flavoured macaroni and black bread, was our luxurious breakfast. No beds whatever, and for a whole week I never took off my clothes, but laid down in them, wrapped in my cloak and covered with dirty sacks. As the water, bad as it was, was very scarce, we could only wash our face and hands, then only partially, every other day. Our eyes were all red with the smoke that continually surrounded us. After the second day of

sun, the rain began to pour in torrents and lasted out the week, frequently confining us to our miserable hole, without the power of drawing or amusing ourselves but by singing with our eyes shut and segars in our mouths, for this accomplishment of smoking is absolutely necessary to keep off any bad effects of the air, which is always in some degree prevalent before and after sunset, though not dreaded as in the months of June, July, and August. Knives were never heard of in these back settlements, and it was with great difficulty we could procure even a fork, which, being of iron and rather a classical form, I have brought off as a relic. To make short of a long history—for it might be a great deal longer—we were as happy as we possibly could be in our miserable state; at the same time, to own the truth, I cannot say I was at all sorry to return to Belvedere. However, the beauty of the temples far outweighed the scale of our griefs, for nothing that remains in any part of the world are so grand and so perfect. I have measured them all in the most exact manner, and have made several sketches of them. You have no idea how much more I have done in the way of my profession than I intended to do. I have been constantly employed in it ever since I arrived. Our Italian gets on excellently. I can converse with the greatest ease and fluency, and ask for almost everything I want, for I have been studying on Dufief's plan, which I am convinced is the best of all.

"I have made a most valuable acquaintance here, I believe I told you, of Sir William Gell; Keppel Craven is also here and a very agreeable man. Did I tell you of Lord Arthur Hill's having been here, a friend of my father's, at Cambray? I am most probably going in three weeks hence to Metapontum, in Calabria, where are remains of some Doric temples that have never yet been drawn by any architects. Lord B. has determined to stay here two months longer, and there is great talk of going into Egypt, as Lady B. has a very great desire to see the Pyramids. She wishes to know what would be your opinion about my going too. I tell her I am sure that wherever I go with *her* you will be perfectly satisfied. Have I not said right? Also in your next letter will you say that whatever Lord Blessington may advance in the way of money you will approve of? for though of what was mentioned to him not half is yet expended, yet of course, as our stay is lengthened, it must in time diminish. You may depend upon my being as economical as possible, though it is absurd to suppose there is no way of spending anything here. They all desire their kindest love to you and my father, to whom, of course, my best love. Count D'Orsay is rather piqued at your saying nothing about him in your last letters, and desires me to send his love. I tell him that if you were to hear him speak English—which he does in the prettiest manner—that you could not refrain from kissing him. I hope you are enjoying your-

selves at this season, as we are here, with all sorts of fun.

"Believe me, my dearest Mother,

"Your most affectionate Son,

"C. J. MATHEWS.

"P.S.—The Delphin Classics I wish of all things to be continued from Mr. Hunter, St. Paul's Churchyard. If that Pausanias of which you spoke is still to be had, pray buy it instantly, as I find here what its real value is. I am very uneasy about my print of Trajan's Column, which, in the hurry of starting, was left at my stables in Tottenham Court Road (Mine's). Pray send directly about it. My dear mother, adieu. Love to all that you know I love."

CHARLES J. MATHEWS TO CHARLES MATHEWS.

"Crater of Vesuvius!!! Jan. 23, 1824.

"MY DEAR FATHER,

"I flatter myself I have chosen a situation sufficiently piquant to write you a letter. Here I am on that mountain, the talk and wonder of the world, the terror of thousands! not merely *on* it, but positively *in* the crater! in it!!! surrounded with smoke and fire! standing on ashes, cinders, brimstone, and sulphur!! How little are the people I look down upon at this moment! they are like the Spanish fleet, they

cannot be seen; the king and all the royal family, all the pomp of the world is lost; all its vices, virtues, pleasures, pains, are forgotten. How truly may life be compared to a broomstick! Now is the time, if ever it can arrive, that Seven Dials, and even Islington, is forgotten! Now are the Tottenham, Olympic, and Royalty Theatres despised! What a scene of horror is around me! Fields of desolation, burning torrents, smoke, liquid fire, and every implement of destruction! . . . I can no more; I am overwhelmed with the magnificence of my own imagination, I sink under the terrors invented and embodied by my own poetical mind. Immediately below me is an extinguished crater, into which three years ago a Frenchman precipitated himself. He remained three days at a little hermitage on the mountain, and wrote some notes to his friends in Naples. His object, he said, was to collect stones and various specimens of lava, for the Royal Museum at Paris. On the third day he went out as usual to collect and examine the volcanic matter on the mountain, and on approaching this crater—then in action—desired the guide to fetch him a particular stone at a little distance off, but on the instant of his turning his back, he threw himself headlong into the burning crater. The guide instantly ran to the spot, but only in time to see him thrown up, and immediately reduced to a cinder. His reason he left among his papers. He said he had long been disgusted with the world and had determined

to destroy himself, but that the last blow had been given him by a young lady, to whom he was much attached, having married in his absence, and contrary to her vows of fidelity to himself.

"About halfway up the mountain is a hermitage, where we take some refreshment on our journey, which is necessary enough, for the labour is very great to arrive at the summit, walking on cinders, and each step that is taken brings the sufferer a yard lower than he was before. In the hermitage is an album, as usual in all show places, for fools to write nonsense in. I only found two bits worth copying. *Les voilà* :

"'John Hallett of the Port of Poole, England, whent to Mount Vesuvius on the 20 of Oct. 1823, and I wood Recomend aney person that go ther to take a bottle of wine with them, for it his a dry place and verrey bad rode.'

"'1823. I have witnessed the famous mountain of Vesuvius in Italy, and likewise the Wicklow mountains in Ireland which I prefer, they talk of the *lava* in a *Palaver* I little understand, and as for the crater, give me a drop of the *swait Cratur* of Dublin in preference. —JAMES O'CONNOR.'

"I write as you may suppose in high spirits, and conclude with saying that though you and your spouse are only my distant relations, that I shall always be entirely yours,

"CHARLES JAMES MATHEWS."

MRS. MATHEWS TO CHARLES J. MATHEWS.

"January 28th, 1824.

"My dear Charles,

"After sealing the enclosed, I felt I had not sent so *direct* a request to Lord Blessington as, perhaps, may be comfortable to you, in case any addition should be requisite to your wishes or wants, beyond the sum he so kindly undertook to supply you with when you left England. Present, therefore, our most particular and respectful regards to his lordship, and say that he will add to the obligations already so freely conferred, if he will furnish you with whatever you find necessary and prudent to require during your happy sojourn with him, and *this* part of his goodness to you we *can* and *will* repay with more solid means than mere thanks, when we are so happy as to see him once more. Neither your father nor myself wish to restrict you, my dearest Charles, in anything that can afford you present gratification or future pleasure, and you will see your bounds, which you must not altogether measure by our will to make you happy, but by your own usual discretion, which we know from experience how to rely upon. Therefore, my dearest boy, make yourself quite easy, and get what your prudent wishes prompt. You must be assailed with numerous temptations to spend money, and we do not expect that you should pass everyone by, neither should we wish you to do so.

"I must hasten to close this, as it is near the post hour.

"Adieu, therefore, and may Heaven bless and preserve you, my dear, *dear* Charles.

"A. M."

CHARLES J. MATHEWS TO CHARLES MATHEWS.

"Belvedere, February 6th, 1824.

"MY DEAR FATHER,

"I have been waiting now more than a fortnight without receiving a letter from home, which I can't understand, as I know you are all so particular in writing. I hope, however, to-morrow, to receive one. We have all been rather dull this week, and have not set foot out of doors, on account of a severe and dangerous illness, which still confines Miss Power to her bed. It is an inward complaint which she has had for years without noticing, and has now come to a crisis. Within the last three days she has had on sixty leeches. I hope she is fast recovering.

"Though I have not been out much this week, I think I shall amuse you by an extract from a letter that has been lent me to read, and which I cannot resist sending you. An Irishman, a few days ago, was walking on the Mole—a fashionable promenade near the sea—rather late in the evening, and was robbed of his watch and money by an Italian, upon which he writes the following letter to Sir Henry

Lushington, English Consul at Naples, to recover his property:

"'SIR,

"'As the authority of Naples, and his Consul, I call on your protection, being an English, that is to say, an Irish subject, and being moreover robbed t'other evening of my watch and also of my money, without any provocation in the world. So without any more bother, I must be after telling you of the whole story, for unless you are *tould* about it, how can you comprihind it? As I said before, I am an English lieutenant, and was born in Ireland—was your honour ever in Ballymahan? Well, sir, it isn't there, but one side of it, where I live when I am at home. So I got up one morning early, with my new pair of brogues and braheens, and walked into a ship to see the Continent. I need not tell you how squamish I was; Mr. Quin (oh, bad luck to him) he can tell you all about my disorder, but don't b'lieve a word of him, your honour; so I got into a *mal* de poste and walked over France, and found myself at Naples, and t'other evening I walks down to the Mole, where all the stone steps are (bad luck to them, it was there I was robbed and murdered). Oh, 'twas on a Friday, of all days in the year, and if I was to die to morrow, I'll never forget it, Mr. Lushington; when up comes a gentleman in a big jock coat, and looking straight in my face

as if he knew me all my life, he bawled out (and his voice was none of the sweetest): "Vostro dennaro." "Upon my word, sir," says I, "and to be sure, sir, you have the advantage of me, you're a foreigner, I see by your English; but my name is not Gennaro, but Patrick Healy at your sarvice." So he laid hould on my breast and spoke more softly, saying: "Signior Patzienza"—— Signior Pat Shenesy, who the devil could he mean by Pat Shenesy? "'Pon my soul, sir," says I, "I know no more about him than the child unborn;" for the spalpeen frowned, and he had two large eyebrows for all the world like the Lord Chancellor, only he looked more like a gentleman; so with that his choler rose, and my collar rose—for he took me by the cape of the coat, and I felt his fingers getting tighter and tighter, remarkably near my windpipe, till I was quite suffocated and speechless, as I tould him, but it was all in vane. Did your honour ever hear Lord Castlereagh speak, before he left us in that ungentlemanly way? Well, sir, this son of a gun, just talking as much of what no one could understand—for what could any man mean by "*Cacciatevi?*" it's more than I can tell you, Mr. Lushington; but I know one thing, I once read a book called Shakspear, and it said as how one Mr. J. Falstaff knew a king's son by instinct—and, by Jasus, by instinct I put my hand into my breeches pocket, and by so doing I put my foot in it, for the fellow cried "*Bravo!*" and from

that moment that he told me he was a *bravo*, I knew it was all over with me. I took out my purse, and he takes out my dollars, and, looking into the bottom of it, he says: "*Poco, poco.*" "Oh, poke into it," says I, "as much as you like, but the devil a testher more you'll find," and with that he looked at me reproachfully, as if he wanted something else, and put a great big penknife within an inch of my body, but all to no use, for there was no more. Then he gives me back my purse all full of emptiness. "*Ecco,*" he says, holding it up to me; and "Where the blazes," says I, "am I to find the *echo*, when you haven't left me a single copper to make a jingle on a tomb-stone?" Pray, sir, was you or Mrs. Lushington ever robbed with a penknife to your bodies? If you was, you may think what an Irish stew I was in while I stood prostrate before him, and how the cold sweat came boiling from my veins; but, however, instead of putting his penknife into my interior, he put it into his own pocket, and I was nigh telling him what a nate noggin of potcheen we should have together, if ever I met the gentleman in Ireland, when—oh, by the Lord, it was too bad!—the rascal spied a bit of my watch hanging out—that is to say, the chain of it—and without even having the manners to say, "By your leave, Mr. Healy," by the powers he fobbed it. Oh, there never was a better going till it was gone. So you see, Mr. Lushington, I was fairly robbed of all my personal property, and yet the greedy thief was not contented

with my all, for the last word he said was "*Partite.*" "What other part," says I, "are you talking about, when you have got the whole?" So I ran away, and he ran before me, and I ran after him, and getting behind him I caught fast hold of his arms, but he pointed to the pen-knife, and I shook him off with a great deal to do, and few there are who would have acted with the same presence of mind and courage. I wasn't rash, but cool and determined—that is, determined not to risk my precious body on so base an occasion; but the villain was afterwards taken up without giving myself any pains in the world, and my watch has been bandied about from one robber to another till it got into the hands of the police, which God send it a safe deliverance under the auspices of your honour, who I am sure will make them shell out in no time. So with my best compliments to Mrs. Lushington and all the family, I am,

"'Your humble Servant to command,

"'PADDY HEALY.'

"Every word of this is genuine, and I think capital. I am at this moment engaged on a large drawing of Pæstum, the wonder of the learned and curious. Everybody is delighted with it, which of course gives me the greatest pleasure, and therefore shall take the liberty of hinting that I am, with best love to my mother,

"Your most affectionate Son,

"CHARLES JAMES MATHEWS."

CHARLES J. MATHEWS TO MRS. MATHEWS.

"Belvedere, February 13, 1824.

"My dear Mother,

"I have been in the greatest anxiety for the last three weeks at not having received any letter from you, for, knowing your exactness in general, I supposed that something must have happened. Yesterday, however, to my great delight, three of yours, Jan. 1st, 12th, 22nd, arrived and quieted my mind, though it is amazingly provoking that, in spite of your exactitude, I am to be constantly harassed by the irregularity of a stupid Neapolitan Government. Nothing can be worse than the post-office of Naples. Lord Blessington has lately received a letter which, from their neglect, has been lying there since last March. I was thrown into the greatest confusion, and rendered almost delirious, by your dating one of your letters December 12th, instead of January 12th; though, after much puzzling, my sagacity rectified the error, not but that in future I should decidedly advise you to adopt the plan of more carefully selecting the month.

"This week has little interest from out-of-door events, for, from poor Shiver's illness, we are naturally caged for a time, which circumstance I am rather glad of, as it gives me an opportunity of working at my Pæstum drawings. We have all been very amusing for

her sake, as the doctors have prescribed warm baths and laughing. The evening before last I dressed myself '*en docteur*,' and arrived to prescribe for and see her. After sitting down and talking for some time, I desired to be excused for a moment, and took the nurse aside to ask her some questions in private. Nothing could be better than it was. The old woman answered every question in the most minute manner, and consulted me upon several subjects, not having the slightest suspicion of the farce we were playing upon her. Upon my again entering the room Count D'Orsay took her out to ask her what the doctor had said, and then sent her in again to ask some other question. In her absence I had taken off my wig and sat down as myself. Her astonishment was the most amusing thing in the world. She searched all round the room, and would not be convinced till I put on my wig again and spoke to her. The day after we had some persons to dinner, viz. Sir William Gell, Keppel Craven, Prince Lardaria, Count Lieven, and a Mr. Williams. Count Lieven is a handsome dashing young man, with moustachios, and son of Count Lieven, the Russian Ambassador. Prince Lardaria is a Sicilian nobleman, and is very intimate with Richard Wilson, and has often been at Bildeston. After dining with them I went up 'by particular desire of several persons of distinction,' and dressed myself as doctor again, and sent down word that I had visited Miss Power, and should be happy to pay my respects to her ladyship.

Upon entering, they all rose, and a chair was placed for me amongst them in the drawing-room. After talking of my patient, the climate of Italy, &c., I was asked for the little song I had made the other day, alluding to 'One Hundred Years Ago,' which I sung, and, after some more conversation, and many unintelligible anecdotes and jokes, I took my leave, undiscovered by the strangers. When I returned, as myself, they all began to tell me of the 'old bore' that had been with them, and Count D'Orsay begged me to give them my imitation of the old pump's manner of singing. I sang the same song over again, precisely the same, and the imitation was pronounced good by all but the Prince, who wasn't quite satisfied with it, as he said 'it didn't give him the idea of so old a man,' to his great confusion afterwards, when he was told that it was the same person. The next morning I arranged my hair and put on moustachios, changing my dress and manner, and arrived at breakfast as Count Lieven. If you had seen Lady Blessington's elegant curtsy to me you would have died. You must suppose how much I was changed when I tell you that Count Lieven is a very handsome young man! Miss Power had not seen him for a year, and yet took me for him the instant I entered her bedroom, quite ashamed that he should have been allowed to enter. . . .

"Give my love to my dear father, and to the Listons, Phipps, E's, L's, F's, G's, A's, and to the whole alphabet

of my friends; but believe me that of them all my sincerest love is for U.

"Your affectionate Son,

"CHARLES JAMES MATHEWS."

CHARLES MATHEWS TO CHARLES J. MATHEWS.

"Kentish Town, February 27th, 1824.

"MY DEAR CHARLES,

"I assure you that this is a great favour, and I hope you will appreciate it. I am obliged to write the greater part of the day and study until two in the morning, and, therefore, you may suppose that letter-writing is not exactly a relaxation from writing and copying matter intended for other people's amusement. I cannot attempt to describe to you the happiness you have bestowed upon me by your very delightful letters. In the midst of all my troubles and anxieties—and they have been great—I have looked forward to the Thursday night that was to bring me four pages of consolation, with greatest avidity, and I am sure it will make you happy to hear I have never been disappointed. If it be a happiness to make others happy, you ought to consider yourself a lucky mortal—for you have bestowed upon your mother and me all that we have enjoyed in your absence. Murray, the bookseller, dined with me lately, and Sir J. Carr happened to be talking about Pompeii, and I read your letter written from

thence; and Murray was so pleased that he said you ought to publish—or rather said he should like to publish—such letters, just as they were written, for the charm was that they were written without the trammels that a publisher usually writes under. Is not that a feather in thy cap, my son? By-the-bye, if *The Chronicle* should travel out to Naples, and Lord B. should see it, and mentions a paragraph in it, I will prepare you with an explanation. Hill was dining with me last Thursday when your letter arrived, and I read it to him. It contained the account of the death of the unfortunate valet, who was so near being buried alive. To my great amazement I heard that thy account was published in *The Chronicle* two days afterwards. A letter from an ingenious young artist, &c. Lord B. and Lady B., &c. This was wrong, but there's no harm in it; still, his lordship might be annoyed if he saw it. If he does, explain how it happened. Pooh, pooh, my dear sir, he knows the *o*-thor. If he does not see it, mum. He shan't happen to know anything again. In return for your amusing Irish letter, which I rather suspect has been heightened by certain wags at Naples, I shall copy a pretty bit addressed to you from that dear little miniature of man—Boruwlaski.*

* Count Boruwlaski, a famous dwarf in those days, was on intimate terms at Ivy Cottage. Mrs. Mathews gives the following description of him in her life of her husband: "Mr. Mathews was exceedingly

"'My dear Friend,

"'I was very much pleased to hear that you had set out with Lord Blessington and his amiable lady to visit Italy. You will, I am sure, be highly delighted in your travels through that charming country, with its great variety of beautiful scenery, and with their admirable works of the greatest artists in architecture, sculpture, and paintings, for which it is so justly famous. There you will gaze the images of many pagan goddesses, and females renowned for their beauty. To also called as Isis, the wife of Osiris, worshipped by the Egyptians, and conjectured by Plutarch to be the same with the goddess Minerva, Venus, Diana, the lovely Helen, and many others. You will, at the same time, enjoy the peculiar happiness of being in the company of a living beauty,

partial to that interesting dwarf, Count Joseph Boruwlaski. He had first seen him at York, where this amiable and accomplished creature was forced by his necessities to undergo the wretchedness of public exhibition. From the first moment of their meeting they conceived a mutual regard for each other. The Count was quick to perceive that his visitor, unlike the 'general,' regarded him as a gentleman, forced out of his natural position by all-subduing circumstance, and one, though 'out of suits with fortune,' not necessarily debased on that account. In a few years after they met again at Liverpool under similar circumstances; and in 1805 the Count came to London, and was invited occasionally to visit us. This elegant and fascinating person was the delight of all who ever knew him; full of accomplishments and good sense, playful as an infant, and altogether the most charming of companions."

whom you may compare with these, and who will be found to excel them all, for never in my life, in my various wandering through the world, did I witness charms equal to those possessed by Lady Blessington. My dear friend, write me and believe your truly most affectionate

"'JOSEPH BORUWLASKI.'

"This has been done, evidently, with such pains that it is not at all funny; but there are two or three metaphorical passages in the letter to your mother that nearly occasioned me a convulsive fit. I have not room, and therefore have sent those passages to Lord Blessington. I must tell you a little bit of little Knight. He was travelling in Lancashire with four large trunks, with 'E. Knight, T.R.D.L.,' on each. He gave sixpence to a guard who unloaded them. The guard surveyed him and his trunks, looked at the direction, and exclaimed: 'T.R.D.L.! You are no more a T.R.D.L. than I am.'

"Ever affectionately yours,

"C. MATHEWS."

CHARLES J. MATHEWS TO MRS. MATHEWS.

"Palazzo Belvedere, Naples, March 11th, 1824.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,

"In *snubbing* me for my love of writing on exterior subjects, or rather my not mentioning those of our in-

terior, you are not aware of what you desire. All our occupations nearly are external, our indoor employments are always the same, and therefore uninteresting in the description. But since you are determined to be made acquainted with our domesticities I shall give you one day.

"In the morning we generally rise from our beds, couches, floors, or whatever we happen to have been reposing upon the night before, and those who have morning-gowns and slippers put them on as soon as they are up. We then commence the ceremony of washing, which is longer or shorter in its duration, according to the taste of the persons who use it. You will be glad to know that from the moment Lady Blessington awakes she takes exactly one hour and a half to the time she makes her appearance, when we usually breakfast; this prescience is remarkably agreeable, as we can always calculate thus upon the probable time of our breakfasting; there is sometimes a difference of five or six minutes, but seldom more. This meal taking place latish in the day, I always have a premature breakfast in my own room the instant I am up, which prevents my feeling that hunger so natural to the human frame from long fasting. After our collation, if it be fine, we set off to see sights, walks, palaces, monasteries, views, galleries of pictures, antiquities, *and all that sort of thing*; if rainy, we set to our drawing, writing, reading, billiards, fencing, and *everything in the world*. At

dinner we generally contrive to lay in a stock of viands that may last us through the evening, and sometimes succeed. After dinner, as well as several times in the course of the day, we go up and pay a visit to poor 'Prim-rose,' who, it is supposed, will be allowed to walk a little in the course of two or three months more. Should we leave before that she must go home by sea, as the motion of a carriage would certainly much injure her.

"In the evening each person arranges himself (and herself) at his table and follows his own concerns till about ten o'clock, when we sometimes play whist, sometimes talk, and are always delightful! About half-past eleven we retire with our flat candlesticks in our hands, after wishing each other the *compliments of the season* and *health to wear it out.* Thursdays usually, and Sundays, the Italian master comes, though for the present we have dropped him.

"MORE PARTICULARS.

"At dinner Lady B. takes the head of the table, Lord B. on her left, Count D'Orsay on her right, and I at the bottom. We have generally for the first service a joint and five *entrées*; for the second, a *rôti* and five *entrées,* including sweet things. The name of our present cook is Raffelle, and a very good one when he likes.

"This is the nature of our day in the house. Almost all the interest of Naples, and indeed of all Italy, is

among the wonderful curiosities with which every city and its environs is overstocked.

"I am more and more anxious to know the result of my father's entertainment. With best love to him, believe me, my dear mother,

"Your affectionate Son,

"C. J. MATHEWS.

"P.S.—Lord B. always cuts his own hair with a pair of scissors!!!"

CHARLES J. MATHEWS TO MRS. MATHEWS.

"Belvedere, May 6th, 1824.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,

"Since last week we have had the regular Italian weather, though till now it has occasionally been stormy and bad. The month of March is the worst in the year, and April little better, but May, I think, must be the most delightful of the whole twelve, as the flies and mosquitoes have not yet begun to bite, and there is generally a refreshing wind. I have enjoyed myself most particularly this week, and in a manner you little think of, for, wonderful to relate, I have taken to walking, for the first time in my life, and enjoy it more than any other mode of travelling. On Monday last I got up at four o'clock, and strapping on my knapsack (a most convenient little one that Lord B. gave me for

Pompeii) I set off in full costume, with my collar on my shoulders open and cool, my linen gaiters and travelling cap, and gaily trudged on to Pozzuoli. There I made a sketch of the Temple of Serapis, which having finished, and without being bored with the attentions of a cicerone, I wandered about among the ancient tombs and palaces, of which there are so many remains at this interesting place, and then crossed the Solfatara, three miles of an extinguished volcano, walking on sulphur and brimstone still smoking, and then reached the Lake of Agnano, by whose shining and refreshing mirror I eat my bread and cheese and hard eggs, which I carried in my wallet, and enjoyed the glorious and matchless views under the cool shade of an olive tree. From hence I crossed gardens and orchards full of orange and lemon trees, from whose boughs I plucked as I pleased, and crossed from one mountain to another till I climbed the magnificent rock by which I arrived at Belvedere as the sun was setting, just in time to dress for dinner. You cannot imagine how delightful this ramble was, altogether about eighteen miles, not meeting a single soul except the peasants, whose good-humoured countenances are always delightful. Whenever I passed through private orchards, there being no hedges, I saluted the farmers and thanked them for their obliging courtesy in allowing me such delicious rambles. This salute invariably ended with an invitation to taste their wine, and on entering the cottage (dirty enough) cakes were produced and excellent country

wine pledged round, the wives and daughters singing and dancing the Tarantella all the time. This, by-the-bye, is the national dance, and is said to be that which cures the bite of the tarantula. The gaiety of these simple people is extraordinary. At parting and following my road, a bunch of flowers is presented and the rosy cheeks of the girls, which I accepted and kissed with pleasure, though to say the truth some of them smelt fervidly of garlic. Nothing can be more delightful than these walks. Yesterday I again shouldered my knapsack, and set out on a longer and more difficult pilgrimage. I walked first to Castellamare, on the opposite side of the bay, a large town, built upon the remains of the ancient Stabia, which was destroyed at the same time as Pompeii, and which possesses the most magnificent view of Vesuvius and Naples and all the bay and islands. Here I was attacked on all sides by men with donkeys, who insisted upon my taking a guide and a mule over the mountains, but I was determined to go alone and was resolute in refusing their proffered services. They told me I should lose myself, but that was the very thing I wanted to do, for I said at home before I started, that they were not to expect me till they saw me, intending if necessary, or if struck with any nice place, to sleep wherever I took the fancy. I therefore started to cross the mountains, over which there is no road, it being a coast where no one ever thinks of travelling, and is entirely inhabited by peasants

and farmers, and losing myself in the most romantic groves of oranges and olives, pines and chestnuts, overhanging the sea, beheld the most picturesque and the most lovely views in the world. When I found a spring, of which there are many, of clear water, I took out my frugal meal, and in my glass made myself soda-water with the powders I took care to bring, eating my bread and cheese and eggs with more delight than I ever eat the most delicious dish in the world. Arrived at Sorrento, I saw the house where Tasso was born, and several remains of temples, and there reposed for an hour during the heat of the mid-day sun. After my siesta, I continued my journey through these romantic spots till I arrived at the very point of the coast where, finding I had still time to reach home the same day, I embarked in a little boat and sailed over the glassy ocean with a gentle breeze, and again reached Naples at sunset, having walked more than thirty-two miles, over a most mountainous coast. The peasants here were the same gay beings as those of this side, and still more simple, and quite as hospitable. I danced the Tarantella with them all, and laughed with them as merry as any of them. There is not one that does not play the guitar, and they amused me with a thousand little characteristic airs. They are always in love with my handkerchiefs, and try all their eloquence to get one, but had I complied with them I should not have had one left by this time.

"I find even now nothing fixed upon as to our

starting, and therefore you may still write on here to the care of Mr. Price. If you have written to Rome I shall get it here the same. Lord Dudley is here and many other pleasant people. Lord Dudley desires to be remembered to you, and so does Mr. Archibald Macdonald.

"With my best love to my father, believe me always, my dear mother,

"Your most affectionate Son,

"CHARLES JAMES MATHEWS."

CHARLES J. MATHEWS TO MRS. MATHEWS.

"June 10th, 1824, Palazzo Belvedere.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,

"The day before yesterday I received your letter of May 14th, in answer to mine from Rome. I am delighted beyond measure at your prudent resolution of writing on in spite of my injunction, as by this means I shall receive your news regularly.

"I think there is not a shadow of doubt but that we shall stay here till September; indeed I may almost say so with certainty, since the approaching heats render travelling quite out of the question. All the English who were at Naples left it a month ago in order to arrive in the North of Italy for the summer. We are most happy in Belvedere, for, during the hot months, it is the only breathing place that can be found. The

sea air is always fresh, and the terraces always cool, admitting of most enchanting walks by the light of the moon; indeed nothing can equal these terraces overlooking the bay, and perfumed with the exquisite fragrance of the flowers below. An Italian moonlight also differs materially from ours in England from the total absence of all fog, or damp mists; not even the slightest dew is perceptible. Not a breath of air is stirring or a sound of any kind to be heard except the exquisite melody of our darling nightingales, who, from the groves above which we stand and in which we are enveloped, burst forth at short intervals with all that brilliancy and richness so often celebrated, but, in such perfection, so seldom heard. Belvedere, at this hour, is elevated into the very highest heaven of poetry. Every moonlight scene that ever was described is here realised and surpassed. The glorious combination of sea, mountain, and island, under the soothing gentle light of the chaste Diana, is viewed with a feeling of reverent admiration that absolutely inspires the soul with an unearthly delight. The perfect clearness with which every object is visible is quite inconceivable. In the midst of the glistening reflection of the pale light on the glassy surface of the sea, is frequently seen the small white sail of the fishing boat gliding in silence through the calm water, or the shining gondola enjoying the heavenly scene, training after it a long line of silvery brightness, and sometimes the subdued sounds of their

distant music falling upon the ear. It is really enchanting, and each night, with various effects of light, I enjoy it from the terrace, which adjoins my bedroom, when all the rest of the house are quietly asleep. Here I literally sit for hours in my morning-gown, without the least desire to sleep, watching with delighted eye the fire-flies, their golden wings glistening as they chase each other from place to place, and sometimes quite illuminating by their numbers the deep purple shade of the garden.

"But my head runs on moonlight and heavenly sights when I ought to be engaged about base earthly things. I speak of silver light distributed by the moon, and wings stamped with golden brightness, when the only silver and gold I have anything to do with is stamped with the head of old Ferdinand and distributed by his Government. Here then I descend from moons, nightingales, and flowers, to pounds, shillings, and pence.

"To come at once smack to the point without flinching, I have spent, from the day I left London up to the present (prepare yourself for the shock)—four hundred and thirty-nine ducats, which make seventy-four pounds sterling, and am on the point of spending more. It certainly does appear an immense sum, and yet it is entirely gone in things absolutely necessary. I do assure you that this is the only thing that renders my stay here uncomfortable, for everything goes well and as I wish it, but the money that I spend appears so enormous

that I really fear to receive your answer to this letter, though I have kept some sort of account of my expenses for you to see. And now that I have disclosed to you the only point about which I am the least uneasy, I shall close my letter and wait patiently for your advice about what I am to do, only observing that though it may be more than you expected, it must not be set down to my extravagance or want of care, for I repeat, I have not spent a single dollar unnecessarily. With best love to my dear father, believe me, my dear mother,

"Ever your most affectionate Son,

"CHARLES JAMES MATHEWS."

MRS. MATHEWS TO CHARLES J. MATHEWS.

"Ivy Cottage, Kentish Town, June 23, 1824.

"MY DEAR CHARLES,

"Your letter arrived yesterday, and certainly gave me a pang, which I have struggled with some success to overcome, and shall endeavour to reconcile myself to; though to hear that your journey is postponed for so long a time at the moment I flattered myself you were performing it, *is* a disappointment. But, my dearest Charles, dismiss from your mind, I entreat, all uneasiness about your expenditure. You are too rational and considerate to overstep *very* much the bounds given you,' and in all reasonable wishes we are *anxious* as well as willing to indulge

you; so get what you *want*, and even what you please above your actual wants. You are so good, that I am not afraid to leave you to your own judgment, and am convinced that I shall find no reason to regret the latitude I give you. Your father joins me in this feeling most heartily, be assured, and, therefore, do not suffer your mind to be agitated about a little money. It is, I repeat it, our wish that you take advantage of all the delights that are virtuously within your reach, as well as professional advantages, and we would not damp our permission to this end by a grudging parsimony. While dear Lady Blesinton condescends to act towards you in my place—as you so gratefully and fondly acknowledge to me she does—you *cannot err*. Indeed little, comparatively, as I have known of her, I feel implicit reliance upon the advice she would give you. Indeed I have (without *a choice*, as it seems, by good fortune) resigned to her that influence which I have hitherto exerted only in my own person — that right which I should be jealously unhappy to give over to any other being living. This may seem unnatural, considering the many intimate friends I have; but Lady Blesinton I conceive possesses every requisite to form the mind and conduct of those about her, and not only these, but an alacrity of will which few can boast. Do as she requires, and I shall think what you do right. I truly and sincerely love her as well as admire her. I never think of her without a glow of the warmest affection, and would

give much to be near enough to tell her so. Present my faithful and fond love to her, and say that upon frequent consideration of the subject, I would not have resigned you to the guidance of any other female I know, though I warmly love many of my friends. I write in such haste that I cannot say all I wish or in the manner I wish, but you must supply all deficiencies in expressing to our beloved Lady B. my sentiments towards her. Your father waits impatiently for my letter to take to town, and I must hastily conclude with a repetition of my injunction that you will not cloud present comfort by fear of our dissatisfaction respecting the means of contributing to it. Lord and Lady Blesinton do so much that we are rather tenacious on our part, and desirous to contribute to your happiness with them. So 'lay out, good Bardolph,' and fear not. You have *sense*, and we will not be *ungenerous*. So be happy; get what you require, and doubt not the *will* where the ability exists; neither the affection, my dear Charles, of your approving and fondly attached parents.

"Heaven guard you, prays your Friend and Mother,

"A. M."

MRS. MATHEWS TO CHARLES J. MATHEWS.

"My dear Charles,

"I hasten to relieve your mind by replying to your anxious letter, received last night, with a

reiterated assurance of our wish that you should be provided with all necessary means during your stay abroad. We have such perfect reliance on your affection and integrity towards us in all things, that we cannot feel a doubt respecting your prudence in pecuniary matters. If you were at home, money would be requisite, and where you are, I can feel satisfied that it is even *more so*. Go on, therefore, with the same anxiety not to overstep propriety in this respect, and you need be under no fears of our censure. What you want you must have, and this we render you cheerfully, with allowance for some little indulgences in the way of expenditure which the temptations you may meet with abroad may induce you to yield to in the way of purchases. In short, my dear Charles, from the past you are fully adequate to judge and regulate the future. You know (prudence always considered) that we are not inclined to be churls to you, and therefore be happy; remember that though we cannot dictate or wish undue consequence in your manner of sustaining your situation, yet we cannot but be anxious for your respectability, and ready with our means to ensure that part of it which is dependent upon us. Again I say, *be happy* and confident in our affection in all things, and in return, my beloved Charles, let us be assured of your entire ingenuousness with us in every affair relative to your interests in life, as on the present occasion. It is all we ask,

and not more, I trust, than you owe, and will freely pay, to such devoted affection as that we have ever shown you; it is, moreover, what you owe to God for His infinite goodness to you in giving you such advantages as you have received so early in life, and the friends He has given you. With the capacity to make just use of the good you profess in so many ways, remember, my dear Charles, remember that *candour* must form part of your motto, it is one of the best qualities you can boast, and without that great virtue many others may be useless to you. . . .

"I am, dear Charles,

"Your loving Mother,

"A. M."

COUNT D'ORSAY TO CHARLES J. MATHEWS.*

"Capo de Monte, Décembre, 1824.

"MON CHER CHARLES,

"Il est inutile que je vous répète combien nous vous avons regretté, vous vous en doutez bien. Au surplus, qu'il vous suffit de savoir qu'il y a un grand vide à votre place que personne ne peut remplir.

"Depuis votre départ Naples est à-peu-près le même, à l'exception que l'ardeur des curieux est un peu calmé par l'horrible événement arrivé à Pæstum. Vous aurez sans doute appris par les journaux que Mr. et Madame Hunt y ont été assassinés. Bientôt l'on

* See Appendix.

sera obligé d'avoir une escorte pour aller à Pompeii. Il n'y a que les artistes qui sont à l'abri de ces attaques, car les brigands savent qu'ils sont armés de *pied en cap*, canifs, compas, &c. Enfin, malgré ces armes, je suis content de vous voir de retour de Pæstum, car votre maison ne me faisoit pas l'effet d'être bien assurée. Dans ce moment il y a à Naples le peintre du cabinet de S. M. le Roi de Prusse; cela ne veut pas dire grand chose. Mais, malgré cela, cet homme est arrivé gonflé de prétention, et enflé de présomption. Le brave Gell, protecteur-général des *humbugs*, s'est cru obligé de l'adopter. Il nous l'a présenté ainsi que ces dessins. Cette homme a passé deux mois dans l'intérieur du Musée de Portici, et a calqué toutes les peintures, et malgré son grand désir de les manquer, cela lui étoit impossible, car rien n'est aussi facile que de calquer avec du papier de soie. Eh bien, Gell est enthousiasmé; il prétend que c'est un prophète qui arrive dans ce pays pour sauver les arts, et si certainement l'homme étoit réellement supérieur, il diroit, Oh, *nasty boy*. Vous voyez que Sir Willy est toujours de même. La description de votre voyage nous a beaucoup amusés, et si j'ai un conseil a vous donner pour imiter un préfet français, c'est de faire tout ce qu'il y a de plus ridicule. Vous êtes bien sûr de ne pas manquer le rôle.

"J'oublios de vous parler du Capitaine S.* qui est encore plus bête si cela étoit possible. Il a dans ce moment

* Captain Smith of the *Bolivar*.

une peine de cœur depuis que je lui ai dit que ces cheveux étoient de la première qualité pour faire un coussin. En outre, il a une peine de jambes en se rappelant que vous courez mieux que lui. Il n'y a pas deux jours qu'il me rappellait que vous étiez plus jeune que lui, qui étoit la seule raison.

"Strangways est parti pour Smyrne, Baily est ici, et va probablement le suivre; je suppose qu'il le rencontrera en Turquie. Dans tous les cas il trouveroit sa tête au-dessus de la porte du sérail du Grand Seigneur, car dans ce pays ils vous coupent la tête sans grande cérémonie.

"Nous parlons souvent de vous, et plus souvent nous pensons à vous, et si vous n'êtes pas un ingrat vous devez faire de même.

"Adieu, mon cher Charles; écrivez moi, car je vous assure que l'amitié que je vous porte est trop sincère pour la laisser passer sous silence.

"For ever your devoted,

"COMTE D'ORSAY."

COUNT D'ORSAY TO CHARLES J. MATHEWS.*

"February 25.

"God bless our souls, my dear Matthias, S——† is gone, et se trouve probablement déjà sur cette route de Kent (d'heureuse mémoire). Son départ nous

* See Appendix. † Captain Smith.

a tous attristés—pour un quart d'heure—car il avoit assaisonné son adieu d'une abondance de larmes qu'il avoit conservé dans son réservoir pour cette heureuse circonstance. Enfin il est parti le cœur gros et les poches pleines. Nous lui avons tous fait un cadeau, et j'ai décidé Lord Blessington à lui donner cet infortuné *cachet marin* que Smith a reçu avec autant de plaisir que le commandement d'une frégate de seconde classe. Nous avons tous la même sensation qu'un malade auquel on a retiré son emplâtre.

"Je vous conseille de craindre plus les faux pas de votre jument grise (si elle vit encore et par conséquent si elle tombe encore) que ceux que vous prétendez faire dans la langue française. Votre lettre étoit trop bien, pour ne pas continuer, et vous savez combien nous vous aimons et que l'absence ne diminue rien. Ainsi de temps en temps envoyez une épître française. Elle sera très bien reçu.

"Je suis fâché d'être obligé de vous parler d'un sujet très triste, mais il faut que vous sachiez qu'Elisabeth vient de manquer la robe rouge de sweet Mary. A dater de ce moment la guerre civile a été déclaré, et ce n'est qu'en sacrifiant Elisabeth pour reprendre Vincenza que les hostilités ont cessées. Vous voyez donc que Mary se porte mieux, puisqu'il s'agit de combat de robes rouges, &c. J'oubliois de vous dire qu'il est définitivement connu que Vincenza porte perruque : Mary en a eu la preuve en main dans un combat singulier. Je vous

donne ces petits détails pour que vous n'oubliez pas si vite notre intérieur de famille. Ne parlez pas de cela à personne, car sweet Mary seroit très fâchée. Il paroit que Williams et Blayney conservent partout leurs traits caractéristiques ; je pense que le dernier regardoit Polichinel pour savoir s'il étoit plus ridicule que lui. J'ai reçu une lettre de Millingen qui *souffle* à Paris plus que jamais, et je pense que ses voisins l'ont fait déloger, à cause de son soufflement pulmonique, car il a été obligé d'aller du bruit de Paris, où son asthme sera confondu avec les voitures que passent continuellement, Rue Neuve des Petits Champs, où il loge maintenant. Je crains que ce cher antiquaire ne casse ses vieux os, et surtout s'il apprend qu'il y a une conspiration formée contre lui par un jeune téméraire qui arrive sur l'horizon pour prouver que tout ce que James a écrit ne signifie rien. Vous pensez bien sans doute que Gell protége cet homme, mais malgré tout, je pense que Millingen sortira victorieux de sa lutte étrusque. Et quoiqu'il soit d'un petit calibre, ses boulets feront plus de brèches que les bombes des autres qui éclatent sans rien dedans. Au surplus, s'il meurt, je le ferai réduire en cendres et mettre dans notre lacrymatoire étrusque. Il y a plus de places qu'il n'en faut, et c'est réellement un tombeau digne d'un maigre antiquaire. J'espère que vous n'avez pas oublié un complimenteur (cela veut dire un flatteur français)—son nom est Durand—que vous avez vu au Belvedere, bien décidé à ne jamais quitter celle qui fait

son bonheur, qui le console de tous ses péchés et le dédommage de tous ses chagrins dans ce monde ici-bas—c'est-à-dire sa collection. Eh bien, M. Durand n'a rien eu de plus pressé en arrivant à Paris que de le vendre au Roi de France, pour une somme bien capable de le consoler d'une perte si chère à son triste cœur. Le voilà donc veuf et décidé à épouser des momies, car il va se donner dans cette branche d'instruction, ou pour mieux dire, de commerce.

"B—— B—— and Co. ont fait banqueroute. Adieu médailles, cigarres, et autres agréments de société. L'Abbé perd par cette faillitte 700 guinées, mais il est bien décidé de les regagner par une route quelconque. Medici visera son passeport et Circelle le contresignera. P—— prétend que c'est un grand comfort que de ne pas faire banqueroute. D'abord il n'a jamais eu grande idée de la maison B——, il pense très peu de F——, et encore moins de Rothschild, mais en revanche il pense beaucoup de D—— et de P——. Dans ce moment M. G—— se fait faire des pantalons, probablement sur le modèle des miens, mais c'est un coup de politique pour prouver aux tailleurs de la ville que sa maison tient bon. Malgré que M—— ne met jamais le pied dans le bureau il me l'a encore certifié sur parole d'honneur la plus sacrée, foi de gentilhomme de Jersey et autres lieux, on a découvert dans Pompeii des choses que nous devons aller voir quand cette fureur d'étrangers sera calmée—vous concevez qu'il est inutile

d'aller à Pompeii pour voir tous les associés de Day and Martin, et de Barclay Perkins. Vous n'avez pas d'idée de la figure des Anglais qui sont dans ce moment à Naples : ce sont réellement les Anglais pour rire. Je vous assure que si le Baron Stültz, de Clifford Street, arrivait dans ce moment il ferait une grande figure parmi ceux-ci.

"Je commence à m'apercevoir qu'il me reste juste la place de vous souhaiter beaucoup d'instruction et de plaisir dans le bureau où vous allez entrer. Enfin, mon cher Charles, si tout le bonheur que je vous souhaite vous arrive vous ne pouvez manquer d'être heureux. Lady B—— vous envoye un million d'amitiés. Lord B—— éternue dans ce moment, sans cela je suis persuadé qu'il vous enverroit au moins 1,500 choses aimables. Pour Mary, elle vous dit tant de choses que je n'ai plus assez de place de les mettre. Pour moi, je vous assure de mon amitié inaltérable et vous prie de présenter mes hommages à Madame votre mère et mes compts. à votre père. Lady B—— se rappelle au souvenir de votre mère, qu'elle aime de tout son cœur.

"Adieu, et pour toujours votre

"Très dévoué,

"D'Orsay."

CHAPTER VI.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY—IN WALES, 1824-1826.

On my return to London I took chambers in Parliament Street, engaged a clerk, and set to work busily on the working-drawings and specifications of the, at last, completed design for the Mountjoy house.

My leisure time was entirely spent at St. James's Square, with Mrs. Purves and her charming family, Lady Blessington having lent her house during her absence abroad to her sister. I had a bed there whenever I required it, and became as much domesticated as though I had been one of her own children.

Louisa Purves, her eldest daughter, had grown up to be a lovely girl of fifteen, sylphlike in form, delicate in feature, and sensitive as a flower, but bright and full of intellect, with every feminine attribute that could charm and captivate the heart, and at once became the one thought of my life. For two or three years we were always together, and looked upon each other as brother and sister; studied together, read Italian, and took our music lessons together, and except when circumstances separated us for short periods, during

which we corresponded regularly, we were never out of each other's society. At the play, at the opera, at home, we sat together, hand linked in hand, absorbed in each other. Mrs. Purves, with cruel kindness, only laughed at our romantic attachment, treating us as children; and having perfect confidence in us, took delight in witnessing our mutual affection. She ought to have known that between a sweet lovable girl, just budding into womanhood, and an enthusiastic lad of one-and-twenty, such unrestrained intercourse, pure as it was, could not be other than dangerous in the extreme.

How was it all to end? I never gave myself the trouble to inquire, nor did Louisa. We were happy, and never gave a thought to the future. That I could ever make her my wife was out of the question, nor did the idea even enter my head; but this Paul and Virginia state of existence could not last for ever.

The "brother and sister" business is generally a fallacy, and platonic attachments between pretty girls and sprightly youths are dangerous experiments, and seldom indulged in with impunity. In our case no harm ensued. We were luckily innocent and well-principled, and I may venture to say that our long and close association was not only tender and affectionate, but mutually advantageous, morally and intellectually.

It was not till long after, when the time arrived for her "coming out," that the idyll came to an end

and the sad blow of separation fell. It was a mortal agony to both of us, and for some time I was a victim —a prey to utter despair. Amidst the pleasures of a first London season Louisa was soon reconciled to the state of affairs, and though we met frequently, as usual, there was no longer the inseparable companionship of the past, and in a short time one of the most beautiful women in London became the wife of John Fairlie.

Thus ended my first attachment, and for years I lived upon the "sweet and bitter" recollection.

The late Sir John Soane was a great friend to me at this time. I don't know how I contrived to ingratiate myself into the old gentleman's good graces, for he was by no means easy of access, but he took quite a fancy to me, and gave me unceasing proofs of his good-will. I had free admission at all times to his marvellous gallery, the free run of his portfolios and splendid library, and accompanied him constantly to inspect the works of the new buildings he was erecting at the Bank of England; being allowed to make sketches of the details of construction, and profit by the valuable information he was always ready to impart. I need not say that his kind attention to me was of the greatest service in every way. He was a most singular old man, and I was remarkably fortunate in obtaining his friendship.

While roaming at will over his beautiful and singularly designed house, admirably illustrating the

means by which, on a very small scale, great effects could be produced by taste and skill, I discovered a "blue chamber." That there is a skeleton in every house may be true, but it is not always visible to the naked eye of a stranger; here, however, it stood in all its deformity in the broad light of day.

George Soane, Sir John's son, was of a literary turn, and wrote for the newspapers. He was, in fact, what is called a "press man." He was also the author of several successful dramatic pieces, "The Innkeeper's Daughter," &c. &c. But he had, for some reason, quarrelled with his father, and cruelly attacked him in his professional character, ridiculed his lectures, denounced his style, and wrote the most severe criticisms upon his architectural works; thus stabbing him in his most vital part. These printed attacks, carefully pasted on one large sheet, were hung up over the chimney-piece in his bed-room, facing his bed, framed and glazed and surrounded by a broad black border, with the following inscription in large letters: "Death-blows given to his mother by George Soane."

The sight of this ghastly record always made me shudder, and one morning, while sitting by the old gentleman's bedside as he took his breakfast, I ventured to expostulate with him on the sad spectacle before me, and urged him to remove this constant reminder of his wrongs, and remonstrated with him upon the impropriety of keeping alive vindictive feelings, which,

if left to time, might gradually become extinct. But I soon found I was in the wrong box, for he put me to my place in a moment with a burst of ungovernable passion, and I took care never again to recur to a subject which it was the height of presumption in me to have approached at all.

The project which had been interrupted by my trip to Italy was now again entertained, and my entrance into the office of Mr. Nash was once more determined on, but it so happened it was not yet to be; for before his answer arrived I had been offered and had accepted the important position of architect to the "Welsh Iron and Coal Mining Company," at Coed Talwn, North Wales. I had scarcely arrived at the scene of action when his letter came, but of course too late to be of service, and the matter was again deferred.

The "Welsh Iron and Coal" was one of the many companies conjured into life by the magic wand of the celebrated (notorious?) John Wilks—not the John Wilkes of No. 45, but the John Wilks of forty-five bubble companies—producing a rage for speculation in London almost equal to the famous South Sea Bubble of years gone by.

The "Welsh Iron and Coal," however, was a genuine concern, and has endured even to the present moment.

The genial kind-hearted John Gray, the worshipful master of the "Inverness Lodge of Free and Accepted

Masons," of which I was an unworthy brother, was elected to the responsible post of resident director. He was a Northumberland man, and had had much experience in collieries at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, though he had latterly been in good practice as a physician in London. He was a gentleman, mixed in good society, and had been, I believe, a fast goer in his time, running through a fine fortune with the usual ease. The post of resident director suited him exactly, as with comparatively little to do, and that of a commanding nature, he could follow all the pursuits of a country gentleman, and hunt, shoot, fish, and drive about, as though he were lord of the manor. I believe it was through his interest that I obtained my nomination, and elated with the prospect, I set to work on my plans and estimates at once.

About a hundred miners' cottages were to be erected, an inn, a chapel, a bridge, a house for the resident director—in fact, a little town. My plans were approved of and ultimately adopted; the most remarkable part of the business being that the buildings are all standing yet, presenting lasting mementoes of my inefficiency.

The director's house of course could not be designed until I had surveyed the site for its erection, having to adapt the materials of an old country seat belonging to the Heartsheath estate, formerly the property of Colonel Wardell; and it being determined that I should

accompany Mr. Gray on a visit of inspection, we started together in his carriage for the scene of action. My father accompanied us on the trip. He was anxious to assure himself that the Company, in which he had been persuaded to take shares, had really a local habitation, as well as a name, which was more than many similar schemes at the time could boast of.

At the inn at Wrexham we fell in for the first time with Mr. Verbeke,* Wilks's partner and associate, who introduced himself to Gray without ceremony, and accepted himself without invitation to the fourth seat in his carriage, being bound like ourselves on a mission to inspect the works at Coed Talwn.

Verbeke was one of the most extraordinary offhand amusing men I ever met. Of imposing presence, remarkably handsome, with most attractive and gentlemanlike manners, always ready with joke and repartee, he was a sort of Theodore Hook in his way, possessing a *sang-froid* and an audacity worthy of the hero of a farce. His eternal chatter and lively sallies beguiled the road, and by the time we arrived at Heartsheath we were as much at home with him as though we had known him for years.

"Heartsheath" was the name of the half-ruined shell of a house which was to be converted into the residence of the resident director. It was beautifully situated in the midst of a fine park, well ornamented with wood and water. At about a quarter of a mile's

distance, and visible from the windows, stood Plas Teg, a splendid old mansion in the Elizabethan style, built by Inigo Jones and belonging to Mr. Charles Roper, a jolly country gentleman, a magistrate and county magnate, keeping the best table, the best horses, and the best pack of harriers in Denbighshire.

Verbeke was delighted at the discovery, and hastened to call upon his friend, "Charley Roper." In a short time he returned with such a pressing invitation to lunch at Plas Teg that it was impossible to refuse, the more so as he urged upon Gray that it was policy to make the acquaintance at once of a man so influential in the neighbourhood; and we all repaired to the proffered hospitality.

We met with the most cordial reception from Mr. and Mrs. Roper and their family, partook of a substantial lunch, and were entertained the whole time by the unceasing rattle of the hilarious Verbeke. Not a man was mentioned but was known to him, not a place but he was familiar with; and, in short, he succeeded in making himself so agreeable that he was decidedly the most popular person of the party.

In the course of conversation during a stroll round the grounds, while he remained behind doing the amiable and ingratiating himself with Mrs. Roper, my father took the opportunity of thanking Mr. Roper for his politeness.

"I am sure," said he, "we ought to be very

grateful to your friend Mr. Verbeke for so charming an introduction."

"*My* friend!" said Roper, much astonished; "why, I never saw the gentleman before. It was as *your* friend that I welcomed him."

"*Mine!*" said my father, "I never set eyes on him till this morning. It is to Mr. Gray I yield the honour of his friendship."

"Not to *me*, my dear Mathews; he was a perfect stranger to *me* till he introduced himself at Wrexham."

A hearty laugh on all sides followed; and the good-natured Roper was so tickled with the incident that he got from us the promise that our discovery should not be divulged, but that we should continue to amuse ourselves quietly with the eccentricities of the oddity whose acquaintance we had made in so singular a manner.

"I owe him a good turn at any rate," said he, "for giving me the opportunity of receiving under my roof such distinguished guests. But for his timely interference I might have been deprived of that pleasure, and I cannot but heartily thank him."

Roper told me afterwards that the matter was thus skilfully brought about by Verbeke. After sending up his card and being ushered into the drawing-room, he apologised for intruding, as a stranger, but as the promoter and one of the largest shareholders in the Coed Talwn Mining Company, he thought it his duty to pay his respects; especially as he was sure Mr. Roper would

never forgive him if he failed to inform him that the celebrated Charles Mathews, with his son, had arrived from London on a day's visit to his new neighbour, Mr. Gray, the appointed resident director of the collieries, and that the chance of meeting that distinguished man might never occur again. If it would afford any gratification to Mr. Roper, he would have much pleasure in bringing his friends over to Plas Teg for a short call and introducing them; an offer which was gladly accepted by Roper on condition that they would do him the honour to lunch there. This Verbeke "could not positively promise, but would do his best to manage." I need not add, that, in spite of its great difficulty, he was successful in his endeavour.

We returned to town much pleased with our trip, and being anxious that my first essay should be successful, I resolved to take up my abode entirely on the spot, in the immediate vicinity of my operations, in order to give my thorough personal superintendence to the works I had undertaken, and in a short time I was ready to start for my Welsh quarters.

The great difficulty was how to get my horse all that distance.

"Cupid" was invaluable. A capital hunter, nearly thoroughbred, and playful as a kitten. Why he was called "Cupid" I never learnt; he certainly was not blind; but we were inseparable companions, and steady friends. He was my "trained steed." He would canter

after me round the large field in sight of the cottage, to the delight of admiring friends, and let me jump on his back, without saddle or bridle, and gallop him over hurdles to the admiration of all beholders.

There were no comfortable railway horse-boxes in those days; and to transport a valuable horse two hundred miles was really a formidable and hazardous venture. At last I came to the determination to ride him down myself, and accomplished the feat in three days with perfect success, "Cupid" and his master arriving at their destination as fresh and fit as if only after a canter in Rotten Row. Over sixty miles a day was not bad travelling either for man or horse; twenty miles before breakfast, twenty miles before dinner, and twenty miles before supper. I let no one touch him, but groomed and fed him with my own hand before supping myself, and put him comfortably in his bed for the night before turning into my own.

A copy of his letter to Jenny, one of his late stable "pals" (why wasn't she named Psyche?) gives a lively description of his journey.

"Mold.

"MY DEAR JENNY,

"Your thoughts have doubtless been on the rack ever since I slipt my cable, but I have not till this moment had any time to sift my ideas, so as to give you an account of my trip, but I must now

put a spur upon my thoughts, and stir up my powers to the task. You know that just after feed on Thursday evening, as I was standing in a musing attitude, gently picking my dessert from among my fragrant hay, with a refreshing grassy feeling creeping over me, King David gave me to understand, from sundry rubs and hints, that my services were required by my young master. Well, I had had my feed and was content, though I did think it rather too soon for digestion, and willingly came to his call. I thought I was going to town, as usual, as did you, but was somewhat startled at the sight of a beautiful bit of Welsh flannel placed under the saddle. 'Oh ho!' thought I, 'we are going to the park, eh?' So I pricked up my ears, neighed, and all that, to look parkish; but to my surprise, on reaching the end of the lane, I was turned to—the left! I thought perhaps this was done to show off, there being some pretty girls opposite, so I just plunged and reared a little, thinking to make myself agreeable to my master, but two pretty sharp kicks at once undeceived me, and I was forced to mount the hill. 'Somebody ill,' I then thought, and made haste to Mr. Killman's; but no, farther still. 'A concert, probably, at the Assembly Rooms.' Nothing of the kind; we passed them at a canter, and not till we had quite left Highgate and reached Finchley did the first conviction flash across me that I was going a journey! Heavens! what a conflict of passions were

now roused! How cruel to be torn away from friends without one adieu—one horse's kiss! I thought of you, Jenny! I thought of the many pleasant evenings we had passed together, licking each other's noses over our stall-boards! I fancied you left in your solitary stall, which, like that in the song, 'serves for parlour, and kitchen, and hall,' reflecting on the hollowness of friendship. Oh Jenny, though parted from you I shall ever wish you well. I shall rejoice in the horse-picious event of your being led to the halter! I shall be present at your bridle. And when in the straw, happy shall I be (as you have little female acquaintance) to stand horse-godmother to your offspring. But it cannot be; we are parted, perhaps for ever! Well! we must look up a-loft, and hope for better times. Till death am I yours, and should I first fall a victim to its unrelenting currycomb and brush off, my *manes* shall visit you! Yes, Jenny, high-blooded as I am now, bloodless will I come, and like a clothes-horse stand before you, a picked saddle of mutton upon my back, making your top-knot to stand on end like quills upon the fretful porcupine. But a truce to these melancholy ideas, and now for my journey. At Dunstable we slept the first night, where they announced 'Entertainment for man and horse.' I don't know how my master was entertained, but I found it very dull work. Next night we slept at Coventry—sixty miles! There, Jenny! what do you think of that? Mustn't I be as strong

as a man to do it? At Coventry, to be sure, I *was* wisped! Oh, my friend! such luxury! Were I King of England I couldn't be better rubbed down or done up than I was. Talk about horsetlers! I'll back my master against a hundred of them; he's a regular will-o'-the-wisp. And then, such a supper! To be sure I *did* eat all the journey. I never cut my corn, as you know, and my master aided my appetite by all the *beans* in his power. I was very much disgusted here by the conduct of the country-bred cobbish brutes, without manners or anything to recommend them; poking their heads over my stall, and staring at me while I was eating, and setting up a great horse-laugh every minute; lazy fellows, who had done no work, yet wanted to come in for a share of my supper, just because they hadn't had a bit in their mouths. However, I couldn't help laughing in my fetlock at their impudence. At Shrewsbury slept next night (sixty-two miles!—there's muscle!), where I was received with great horsepitality. By-the-bye, on returning to my stall after rubbing, and combing, and feet-washing, I found a cow in my bed, pretending that she was chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancy; but she completely showed her cloven foot, for I found her fancy was to chew some of my sweet and bitter hay. On Sunday, at twelve, we got to Mold, and I may say that I am as well as, if not better than when I started. I have picked up an acquaintance with some

pleasantish folks here; one an agreeable young spark enough, with some knowledge of London, and his friend, rather heavy and sluggish, but sensible; besides a sort of hobbledehoy, whose character and manners are hardly formed enough to say anything of; his temper seems good, and therefore it promises to be pleasant enough down here.

"And now, my dear Jenny, for the present, adieu. Pray take care of yourself, for the sake of your friends; and as money makes the mare go, eat away and return the compliment—let the mare make the money go.

"With kind regards to Sir John and to our friend Girth, should you see him,

"Believe me,

"Yours, ever unhaltered,

"CUPID.

"P.S.—Could you manage to send down my body-clothes? for I find more attention is paid here to dress than I expected."

Cupid soon became a celebrity, taking honourable stand by the side of Duchess, Roper's clever chestnut mare, and his brother-in-law's spanking black horse. He was at first a little bothered copping the stone walls and breasting the punishing Welsh hills; but in a short time was as clever at his work as any rough-and-ready Welsh

pony, while at a brook he was not to be excelled by any horse in the county. Many a time, after a sixteen-mile ride to cover, he was hunted with the Belgrave hounds at Eaton Hall, and did himself honour in the eyes of a fastidious field.

For more than a year my headquarters were held at a quaint old Welsh farm at Pontblyddyn, about half a mile across the meadows from Heartsheath, and all progressed favourably. The beauties of North Wales were in a different way as striking, and offered as much charming subject for the pencil as Italy itself, and the hospitable society of the neighbourhood made my sojourn there exceedingly pleasant. Hunting and shooting, fishing, sketching, and writing occupied my leisure hours. I had already furnished much matter for my father's "Entertainments," and having plenty of time on my hands I sent him up large contributions, in the shape of songs and characters.

Ere many months had elapsed I had contracted the closest intimacy with my kind and worthy friends, Mr. and Mrs. Roper, and at last yielded to their frequently repeated invitation to remove bag and baggage to Plas Teg, where I was at once installed as one of the family. This was indeed a delightful change, and I fully appreciated it.

I speedily assumed the important position of second whipper-in, and knew every hound by name and voice, as well as if they were my own children. On the days

with the harriers I generally rode a big-headed old gray hunter of Roper's and gave Cupid a rest, the old horse literally teaching me my business.

Chatting over sporting matters after dinner one day, Roper pointed out the advantage, in case of having to cross a river, of dismounting and holding on the pommel of the saddle, while the horse swam across, thus relieving him from the weight of his rider. I remembered the hint, and, looking upon the swimming of rivers as usual everyday occurrences, when a short time afterwards the hounds were running merrily up a hill on the other side of a pretty wide stream, without a moment's hesitation, and to the amazement and dismay of everyone, I banged the old gray into the water. Down we went, out of sight for a moment, but on emerging I managed to dismount, according to directions, and placing my hand upon the pommel, landed safely on the other side, minus my hat, but all right in every other respect, save and except the good ducking I deserved, amidst the laughter of the much relieved spectators, who had quietly trotted over the bridge, which stood only a few hundred yards farther up the river; the very hounds, I believe, joining in the laugh, having suddenly come to a check, rendering haste of any kind unnecessary.

"What the devil made you do that?" said Roper.

"Why, didn't you yourself instruct me how it was to be done?"

"Yes, but I never thought you would be fool enough to do it! That idiot of an old horse, too, who is old enough to know better! The sooner you get home and put yourself and a good jorum of hot brandy-and-water between the blankets, the better, and another time take my advice—try the bridge."

Of course this was a standing joke against me; and as good jokes were somewhat scarce in the principality, I never heard the last of it.

The old blind harpers, who were then so common in North Wales, and have now become so scarce—having disappeared with the high beaver hats that were so characteristic among the women—were my especial delight, and their grand old national music afforded me constant pleasure. Why these old bards were all blind I don't know, but it seemed an indispensable portion of their profession.

During my sojourn at Plas Teg, we made a brilliant equestrian expedition to Llangollen. Dean Roper and his daughter, Mr., Mrs., and Miss Roper, myself and the respective grooms, formed an imposing cavalcade. After a charming ramble up to Castle Dinas Bran we had a jolly dinner at the hotel, and during the repast were entertained by a venerable white-bearded Druid, one of the most splendid specimens of his craft I ever encountered. The old fellow was a noted artist, and had a fine collection of all the most popular melodies, and among them one I had never heard before. He

said it was some twenty years since he had first met with it. It was called "Cader Idris;" and I made him play it over to me till I had learnt it correctly.

Elated with my discovery, for such it really seemed to be—none of my friends having heard it before any more than myself—I lost no time in putting words to it, and the result was a great success.

At the picturesque farmhouse at Pontblyddyn, in which I lived, was a pretty little Welsh dairymaid, named Jenny Jones, and a simple ploughman, called David Morgan. The ballad I then composed to my newly-discovered national air, bearing the young lady's name, has since made the interesting couple familiar to London ears. They would perhaps be astonished to know their history publicly recorded, and blush to find it fame.

This, of course, was years before I had any idea of going upon the stage, and I only mention it in connection with the mortifying disenchantment that awaited me.

I had been singing my new ballad one evening, at the house of some friends in London, to a tolerably large party, when an old gentleman in a voluminous white choker and a shiny suit of black, looking very like a Methodist parson, came up to me with a very serious face, to remonstrate with me, I feared, for the levity I had been guilty of, and to my surprise said:

"My dear sir, allow me to express to you the great gratification the perfect little ballad you have just sung

has afforded me, and to assure you that I appreciate the honour you have done me in selecting for its illustration an air of my humble composing."

With a look of ineffable pity, I answered the poor maniac: "I am sorry, dear sir, to rob you of so pleasant a delusion, but unfortunately the air is one I picked up myself, years ago, among the Welsh mountains, and is, I flatter myself, quite original, and hitherto unknown."

"Pardon me, in my turn, dear sir," said the old gentleman, smiling, "if I inform you that the air in question was composed by me for the Eisteddfod in 1804, obtaining the prize at that festival. I named it 'Cader Idris,' and I shall have great pleasure in sending you the music, published at the time, with my name attached to it."

Patatras! Down went my great antiquarian discovery, and I was left desolate.

The old gentleman was John Parry, the Welsh composer, and father of the illustrious John, whose genius has delighted thousands; and when, long afterwards, I introduced the ballad of "Jenny Jones" in my piece of "He would be an Actor," and it got to be whistled about the streets, he presented me with a handsome silver cup, with a complimentary inscription in most elegant Welsh, in commemoration of the event.

But to return to business. Two thousand five hundred pounds was the sum granted by the Company

to be expended on the house of the resident director; but I soon discovered by the time I had carried out all Gray's requirements, which included a handsome stone lodge, an ornamental stone bridge, a solid staircase of Bangor slate, in imitation of black marble, similar to one he took a fancy to at Penrhyn Castle, and several other little rather expensive nicknacks, the sum granted would not more than half suffice for the purpose. On this I immediately proceeded to town, and laid the circumstances before the board of directors, requesting further advice or a further grant of money.

In a few days a visiting committee of three, consisting of John Wilks himself, and a couple of directors, made their appearance at Heartsheath, and passed a week examining the Coed Talwn works, living like fighting cocks at Gray's expense. In vain I pressed for an answer to my application, till, on the last evening of their stay, I sent in a note to Mr. Wilks, insisting on being informed what course I was to pursue, as I declined to proceed with the work in the face of the certainty of so far exceeding the original estimates. I had evaded dining with the party, lest, in the midst of the conviviality, I should not find a moment to obtain the information I required.

As I expected, they were all as jolly and in as noisy good-humour as could be wished, and on the back of my note Wilks scribbled in pencil: "£5,000 have been granted for the completion of Heartsheath and its de-

pendencies, so make your mind easy, young shaver.—JOHN WILKS."

This was enough, and I carefully preserved the valuable document in my pocket-book. It was lucky I did so.

A similar piece of caution proved another fortunate thing for me. Within a couple of yards of the kitchen and offices to be erected stood a fine old tree, which Gray insisted should not be removed. In vain I urged that the roots, extending under the walls of the new buildings, would render the foundations unsafe. "No matter," he said; "it was a sacrilege to cut it down." And so it was; but it couldn't be helped. However, he stuck to his point, and got both the builder and my clerk of the works to back him in his opinion that no danger was to be apprehended from it. "Very well," said I, "have your way; but I make one condition. You must acknowledge my protest in writing, and exonerate me from all blame in the matter should mischief occur."

Sure enough mischief did occur; and while the mortar was still wet, a single stormy night did the business, and caused a settlement, as I had predicted. It turned out, I believe, ultimately, that it was about the only settlement the builder was able to bring about, though the Coed Talwn speculation had become shaky enough for anything.

Thanks to the energy and determination of one man

—Mr. W. Clark—the bubble companies were bursting up in every direction, exposed by his indefatigable exertions, and the "Welsh Iron and Coal" threatened to follow suit. At any rate, confidence was destroyed, and no more money forthcoming.

I was summoned, among other "delinquents" and squanderers of the public money, before a general meeting of the shareholders. I was accused of having grossly exceeded my estimates, and my father was called upon to disburse the amount in excess, to prevent the proceedings which were threatened against me. At this meeting I underwent a rigid cross-examination, and had to submit to what is allegorically denominated a good "badgering" from Mr. W. Clark.

How was it that, with only two thousand five hundred pounds granted by the Company, and agreed to in my estimates, I had wantonly expended nearly double that amount?

I simply replied, that subsequently five thousand pounds was granted to complete the Heartsheath works, out of which I had only spent four thousand six hundred; four hundred pounds less than the amount granted.

"Granted by whom?" said Mr. Clark.

"By the directors themselves, through their secretary, Mr. John Wilks."

"I never gave any such latitude," said Wilks. "Have you anything to show that I did?"

"I have," said I, throwing the pencilled note across the table. "I believe that is your handwriting. That is my voucher."

This turned the scale triumphantly in my favour, and got me out of that scrape.

My protest to Gray and his written certificate, taking upon himself the blame of the settlement, disposed of what was much more important to me, the charge of incompetency. It was an early lesson to me never to destroy documents, however trivial they might be at the time, and I have found it most useful to me through life.

I must mention one other little lesson I received in connection with my Welsh business, and I have done.

I had occasion to go over to Liverpool with my builder, to choose some marble chimney-pieces, and the three we selected amounted to fifty pounds. But, strange to say, the manufacturer took an odd fancy into his head that he should prefer their being paid for on delivery. He knew my builder very well, but, not knowing anything about the Company, he thought it would perhaps be safer to make it a ready money transaction. I think he was right.

"However, Mr. Davis," said he, "of course, your bill at three months will be the same thing."

"Exactly," said Mr. Davis; "that will be the same thing;" turning to me, "I'll draw the bill, which you can accept in the name of the Company, and I can

send in the sum in my monthly account, so that it will be paid before the bill comes due. That will be the easiest way."

"Of course," said I, "that will be the easiest way." In fact, nothing could be easier; for it did not take me a minute to write my name across the bill, and the thing was done. I said, as Warde the tragedian used to say, when giving a bill in exchange for a cool hundred, borrowed at sixty per cent., "Thank God, that's paid." It was the easiest thing in the world.

Davis sent in his monthly account to the board, as promised, but the unpleasant moment had arrived when payments were not so prompt as usual, and a most irregular and unprecedented thing happened—the bill was presented and dishonoured. I have known this happen more than once since, but at that time I had never conceived such an event possible. What was still more remarkable was that proceedings were taken against me, and that, in order to prevent further mischief, my father had to pay the fifty pounds.

There and then I solemnly vowed that "never again," under any circumstances, would I be tempted to put my name to a bill. "Never again!" How often is that phrase used and abused by everybody, and I proved no exception to the rule, for, later on, I broke through my determination—I may say even several times.

The following short correspondence will show the sort of way in which my friend John Wilks transacted

business. Without previous intimation of any kind I received from him this cool letter:

JOHN WILKS TO CHARLES J. MATHEWS.

"36, New Broad Street, Dec. 17, 1825.

"DEAR SIR,

"You are elected one of the surveyors of the Ægis Fire and Dilapidation and English and Cambrian Life Insurance Company, at a salary of £100 per annum, besides travelling expenses; and I beg you will pay to me, at the temporary offices of this Company, 36, New Broad Street, £50 on account of the shares you must hold as a qualification.

"I remain, dear Sir,

"Your very obedient humble Servant,

"JOHN WILKS, Jun., Secretary."

CHARLES J. MATHEWS TO JOHN WILKS, JUN.

"Douglas Hotel, Edinburgh, Dec. 21, 1825.

"DEAR SIR,

"I cannot but be proud of the great honour conferred upon me by the appointment you have been kind enough to announce to me of surveyor to the Ægis Insurance Company, or insensible of the obligation which I have no doubt you have placed me under to you for the recommendation. The conditions attached to it are, I confess, rather alarming, in the present state

of affairs in London; and the prejudice existing against all stock companies naturally makes me desirous to have a complete understanding as to my responsibility respecting the shares you say I must necessarily purchase as my qualification. At all events I cannot comply with your request until I have consulted with my father. I shall see him by the time I can be favoured with your answer. I know he has considerable uneasiness about the shares he holds in the Welsh Iron and Coal Company, which I have heard him say he thought one of the best. He has been advised to forfeit those he purchased in the Distillery, rather than pay further deposits.

"Excuse me for saying that your letter is not explicit upon the subject of the Ægis, of which I have never even heard. Pray inform me how many shares I am compelled to purchase as my qualification, and the extent of the sum I must lay out, and for which I must be responsible.

"Dear Sir,

"Your obedient Servant,

"C. J. MATHEWS."

JOHN WILKS TO CHARLES J. MATHEWS.

"36, New Broad Street, Dec. 28, 1825.

"DEAR SIR,

"I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, and to say, that in proposing you as surveyor of the

Ægis Insurance Company I did it with a view to serving you as a young man just starting in your profession, and to whom I considered a situation of such importance would have been acceptable; but as that appears not to be the case, I shall feel myself at liberty to dispose of the appointment elsewhere, unless I receive a letter from you by a very early post, saying that you are willing to accept the situation on the terms mentioned in my former letter.

"I remain, dear Sir,

"Yours very truly,

"JOHN WILKS, Jun."

Disgusted and mortified at the lame and impotent conclusion of my great Welsh experience, I joyfully abdicated my command at the conclusion of my contract, and fell into the ranks again. The fact is, I had not satisfied myself in any way. I felt that I had not the requisite knowledge to undertake much beyond what I was then doing, and what I was then doing was anything but what my youthful fancy had pictured. Workmen's cottages and village ale-houses were not congenial to a mind filled with Italian images, and panting with desire to execute works of Palladian grandeur; and the feeling that, should the opportunity arise, I was unequal to cope with the practical machinery and intricate calculations of estimates and specifications became so alarmingly strong, that I determined to study hard for a

couple of years (as had originally been proposed before my trip to Italy) with Mr. Nash, who, as the popular architect of the day and the old friend of my father, was the very person to forward my views; and I took the long-proffered stool at a desk in his office as meekly as though I had not so lately been at the head of my two hundred workmen, with the dignity of commander-in-chief.

CHAPTER VII.

CORRESPONDENCE, 1825-1826.

CHARLES MATHEWS TO CHARLES J. MATHEWS.

"London, Saturday, April, 1825.

"MY DEAREST CHARLES,

"I write this from Mr. Nash's, in the gallery. I have been so nicely had, for your sake. I wrote him a note yesterday to beg he would see me for five minutes to-day, and begged he would appoint his own hour. What think ye? what hour would you guess? Ten this morning—to breakfast! Well, I prepared for this event like the king for his coronation, who moved from Carlton House to the Speaker's. I moved to Broderip's. I laid all my plans, bribed the servants to watch me as I lay asleep, to see me out of bed, &c., and I actually arrived in Regent Street at the hour appointed. Brown and t'other friend of yours breakfasted. I found Nash more friendly than ever, if possible. He assured me that he would do as much for you as if you were his own son. In short, nothing could be more flattering or agreeable. We, of course, chatted upon the monument business. He intends to

erect a temple of the Doric order in one of the squares —as he terms them—either at the top of his street, near Piccadilly, or on the site of Carlton House. He as nearly as could be proposed that your name should be attached to this, to put you on and make you known, and thinks you cannot begin too soon to draw your plans for it. Is not this great?—I say glorious! I have been waiting here half an hour by second appointment to go with him to Mr. Arbuthnot, who has the management of this sort of affairs; I expect him every moment, therefore shall be obliged to break off abruptly, but thought you would be pleased to hear that I had executed your commission, and with so much satisfaction. I begin to be very impatient for your arrival. I must think that they are acting very unjustly in detaining you so long at the caprice of this London surveyor. I think you should expostulate and point out to them that your time is as valuable to you as the 'learned Theban's.' Pray exert your energies. We are quite satisfied with your explanation, and your feelings of 'duty,' &c., and are quite convinced that your desire to come home is as strong as our wish to see you, but yet your good-nature may be imposed on, and I think it is. . . .

"Your mother's love, and all that is kind from

"Yours ever affectionately,

"C. MATHEWS."

CHARLES J. MATHEWS TO MISS HOME PURVES.

"Bourn, N. Wales, Thursday, April 7, 1825.

"MY DEAR LLEWYZRR,

"Having at last some comparatively leisure time, I fly on the wings of a goose to have the pleasure of conversing with you on paper, tho' I am sorry in this instance to have all the talk to myself. I sit down for the purpose with some Welch mutton in one hand and a Welch rabbit in the other; with a Welch pony staring at me through the door and a goat through the window, a Welch harp in the corner, St. David on the wall, a Welch wig on my head, and a leek in my mouth. Thus equipped, I cannot well fail of doing justice to my subject. I shall not, however, write this letter in Welch, because I am not quite sure of the spelling, otherwise, with the exception of the pronunciation and reading, I can get on pretty well, only I can't make out a word they say to me, because they speak it so fast. Mr. Gray is not so forward as I am, and can't yet pronounce Llwrzstlythlrn. It is very difficult. I have already loosened many of my teeth, and greatly checked the growth of my hair, by the exertion. But, however, 'Nil desperandum,' as your favourite Chaucer says.

"The scene of my business lies in the mines and collieries of Coed Talwn, which are exceedingly interesting. Here are hundreds of men, as Richmond says,

'advanced into the bowels of the land,' and working great holes in all directions. If I were the earth I should think it a great *bore* to have fellows continually digging in my bowels. First of all, I must inform you that tho' many people have seen pigs *killed* I have seen them *made!* Aye, pigs of lead too, and what is still more strange, the instant they are made they begin to run!!! There are some pigs of iron too, but none of them have curly tails. There are plenty of engines at work always in the mines, but they are quite different to those in London, for there they are employed to put out fires, while here they are used to make them. They are worked by steam, on which account the workmen are continually in hot water, otherwise, they are cheerful enough and always singing—of course in the minor key—which astonishes me, for I always thought there was scarcely anything but blubber in Wales. The nearest town is Mold—Ironmould of course—and so you see altho' not yet dead, I have been underground and in Mold. Here, magistrates are appointed over the men, they are ordered to study nothing but Blackstone and Coke, and what is singular they never punish men for forging.

"We talk of getting up some plays here, and perhaps the arrangements I have made may interest you. As the object of the theatre will be to give employment to the mines, I propose that no article shall be received that does not come from thence. Thus we shall have a steel curtain, which will be handsomer than glass. The

landscapes are to be of cast-iron, skies of slate, clouds of coal, a freestone moon, and leaden wings. Actors in the same manner and material. Thus our generals are to be brass; dandies, pewter; lovers, fuel; ladies, silver; landlords, gilt; nabobs, japanned; old women, pinch-back; authors, steel; harlequins, quicksilver; leaden preachers, a copper captain, plated lawyers, and iron old men. So that our generals are always running; our captains hot; dandies cold; lovers all on fire, and ladies melting; landlords made to take in; nabobs coloured and lined; old women back-biters; authors dull blades, neither polished nor keen; harlequins with "the winged feet of Mercury." Preachers—formed from pig—bores; lawyers subtle, and old men their clients, cast. The actors, you see, are all men of metal, tho' from the rehearsal they seem but poor. They hammer out the hard words too much. I expected more from them I own, for I heard that all Wales spouted amazingly. Our first pieces are to be 'Cymbeline,' and the play is well cast, Posthumus particularly. With Foote's farce of 'The Minor,' Mrs. Cole by the clerk of the works; followed by the 'Mayor of Garratt,' the Major by a miner. Our lamps are gas, and music by steam, and the engines will be played between the acts; the miners will, of course, go into the pit, that is if they choose to post the cole. Our head is Gray, who is the very pink of perfection among these black people, who think him deep read. He appears to me to be rather green to leave town on such a

speculation, and will look blue if it should not succeed. But he seems a lucky wight, and I hope will get plenty of the yellow boys, nothing looking black at present but the coals. Here he is then, abandoning the title of Sur-geon Gray, to be a prince of sacks. Well, I hope he will 'drive his pigs to a good market,' tho' the coal scheme, I am sure, will all end in smoke. Everybody is delighted at his taking the house except the peacocks, who have been spreading sad tales about it, and the ducks, who are determined to have nothing but quacks. The house I propose to call Ironmongers' Hall, as its foundation is upon iron and is therefore likely to stand its ground. The materials must be drawn from the same source as those of the theatre. It is to be roofed with grey slates, and the weathercock is to be made from the pigs I mentioned, so that we shall really have 'hog in a high wind,' and I daresay the wind will always be 'sow-west by sow.' The dogs are to be warmed with kennel coal; the sleeping-rooms will be capital, as he has plenty of beds of iron and sheets of tin. His clothes will be ironed for nothing, but must be taken not to steal them. His visitors are all to be select, and orders are given that no calves or asses shall be taken into Gray's. But I have room for no more nonsense, and I fear I have quite tired you out, so God bless you, and good-night. My very best love to all the dears and pets, and pigs and ducks, and kits and chicks. I fear no Italian—and I now would be very much obliged to

you, if you would do me the favour to gratify me so far as to believe me,

"Your most affectionate, true, and everlasting

"C. J. MATHEWS.

"P.S.—This Bourn is not 'the bourn from which no traveller returns,' as I hope to be home on Sunday at the latest. . . ."

CHARLES J. MATHEWS TO MRS. MATHEWS.

"Pontblyddyn, June 5th, 1825.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,

"Brother Right Worshipful Master Gray is certainly gone mad. His doings since his arrival in this place would establish his lunacy in any court in Christendom. I must, as well as I can, give you some account of the various little acts which constitute my charge, and then leave you to judge for yourself, though I fear they are so exceedingly numerous that I shall not be able to recollect half the little touches which give the great character to the whole.

"First of all, he has, like Lenitive, 'hung his hat and wig upon a peg' (without casting any reflection on his successor), and is determined to enjoy his 'otium cum dig-my-tatoes' among the rural mines and collieries of North Wales, sinking into the gentle country gentleman, interesting himself in all the little ways of his tenants, providing wives for the husbandmen, rakes for the

wives, stocking the girls with hoes, and teaching the boys to sow, in short entering thoroughly into all the concerns of their domestic economy. It is necessary, *imprimis*, that I should just give a sketch of the comforts of the house he is come to live in. I have just demolished the whole of the offices, and have left only five rooms altogether standing, two of which are barely habitable, having no glass in the windows and no etceteras whatever, and the other three, bare and not habitable at all, consisting merely of walls and apertures where the windows will, in process of time, be placed. Into this skeleton of a house, containing literally but two really liveable rooms, does he remove himself, his little son, his coachman, groom, butler, and livery boy, his cook, coachman's wife, and housemaid, nine 'precious souls and all agog,' bringing with them two carriage horses and two dogs, without any convenience of any kind to lodge them in. As soon as he arrives he goes to Chester, and returns with two cows and a calf, two grown porkers, a sow and ten little ones, making as you may suppose a precious *litter*. These are to have houses built for them immediately; C. J. M. architect to the colony. I thought him rather premature in this addition to his family (I don't allude to the pigs), when next day he arrives from Wrexham with fourteen chickens, twelve ducks and a drake, sixteen pigeons, and a cat; said live-stock to be also well housed; said C. J. M. architect. With these a proportionable quantity of hay for the

cows, corn for the horses, paunches for the dogs, bran for the pigs, chalk to whiten the calves, barley for the chicks and ducks, peas for the pigeons, and meat for the Christians. Where they were stowed I know not, but there they are (I am sorry to say), all alive and thriving. Next day our provident Brother buys a young hunter from his friend Mr. Roper, and returns from Mold, with a horse and cart, a churn, divers and sundry pots and pans, a spit, ten fishing-rods, and a double-barrelled gun, hiring a dairymaid (without any character) by the way, and wishes a cart-shed to be erected by the next morning, and lodging arranged for said dairymaid—C. J. M. architect—in the capacious family-residence, which like the lodging-houses, is 'unfurnished with every other convenience.' But I really cannot do justice to his purchases, they are too numerous to be lodged in the storehouse of any one person's memory. So I must turn to matters of equal importance. The first novelty is the arrival of Mr. Smith, his secretary, on a visit, and the intelligence by letter from his sister, that she is charmed at his invitation, and will certainly not delay more than a month in availing herself of his kindness, and will bring with her his little girl to spend the summer months, who is to be christened here in July. Three to begin. To-morrow he goes to Liverpool to meet Mrs. Kershaw and Mrs. Wilks, who are come from London expressly to see Coed Talwn Park, making five. A letter this morning expresses the acquiescence of

Messrs. Wilks, Kershaw, Barrett, and Peter Moore, to join his fishing party on the 8th = nine. A note from Mr. Russell, member for Newcastle, who is somewhere in the neighbourhood for a few days, and will just run over = ten. Potter Macqueen, another member, can only (unluckily) spare a few days = eleven; and to crown all, the chances are in favour of a 'run down' from Verbeke, closing with glory this imperial dozen of surprised worthies, who no doubt expect every comfort and delicacy of the season in the 'new house' of the Right Worshipful Master of the Royal Inverness Lodge. Now for his more serious occupations. First, he has just received his 'dedimus,' which means he is made a magistrate of the county! he has the command of a troop in the Flintshire militia, is in treaty for a pack of hounds and capacious farm; is about to establish a Masonic lodge in Mold, and to-day offered to bet that in less than two years he should hold his seat in Parliament! To wind up all, and though last not least, he is (by his own delighted confession) director of twenty-two companies, surgeon to four or five; resident director (with three hundred shares) to the Welsh Iron and Coal, and shareholder to the amount of nine thousand pounds in every company in London!!! and thus is the old saying rendered quite impossible, for I defy anyone to 'judge of such a man by his company.'

"Now I have completed all I can for the present recollect of this multifarious man, who must be in two

places at once 'like a bird,' to attend to all his affairs, and having got through this sheet, will get between two others, the clock just striking midnight, and it being high time all sober architects to Welsh companies should be in bed, and so bon soir, bona sera, nose dauogh, and good-night.

"Your ever impudent Son,

"C. J. MATHEWS."

CHARLES J. MATHEWS TO MRS. MATHEWS.

"Saturday Night, Mold.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,

"I had written you a song after dinner, but there want two or three verses to complete it, describing my adventures since Wednesday night; and, as the post is about to go out, I must send it you another time. I shall merely say now that after sleeping on a bench at the George and Blue Boar, I found Gray in the morning too sleepy to start, for which reason (for I believe that to have been the only one) he feigned business in the city until three o'clock; so I went to bed and snoozed very comfortably till twelve. At three we started, and after travelling all night, reached this place yesterday night at ten. We did not stop a moment at Birmingham, or I would have written from thence. It poured with rain the whole way, which made it very pleasant, as we had no dust. We stopt at twelve on Thursday night at Oxford, to

take our tea, during which time I ran to Christchurch and wrote these lines to John Fawcett:

FROM AN ACTIVE ARCHITECT TO A PASSIVE STUDENT.

Starting from town at half-past three,
Stopping at Oxford to take tea,
My time I use in seeking you;
So how d'ye do?

But our four horses being *to*,
I quit tea, buttered toast, and you;
For I must now to Chester fly,
And so good-bye.

"We had very pleasant companions all the way, one of whom I smoked. 'Have you been to the exhibition?' said I. 'I have,' said he. 'A very good one,' said I. 'It is,' said he. 'Pray,' said I, 'did you ever by any accident see a picture of Cooke, in "Shylock"?' 'I have,' said he. 'Then I have you, by Jove,' said I; 'you are Mr. Phillips, the Academician.' 'I am,' said he. This was odd, was it not? I had never seen him before, but I was sure he was an artist, by his asking at every stage 'if there was time to take a dish of tea?' and by seeing T. P. and an exhibition catalogue in his hat.

"I have no more to say, and if I had I couldn't say it, for I have not time. So here I am,

"Your dutiful Son to command,
"C. J. MATHEWS."

CHARLES J. MATHEWS TO MRS. MATHEWS.

"Pontblyddyn, June 11th, 1825.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,

"I received your letter from Gower Street with the greatest pleasure, and now, having *no* time, will send you the short song you ask me for. The reason why I did not send it at the time was, that I really hardly thought it worth the trouble.

"The *whole* party mentioned in my letter about Gray, are *all arrived*, and finding the beds, fishing, shooting, driving, &c., impracticable, have set off to Caermarthen on a trip, and taken their host with them. His letter inviting you down arriving at the same time as mine, was the finest thing that could happen in confirmation of my statement.

"With love to *Papa*, and best regards to Hook and B., I am,

"Yours 'in the natural bonds of affection,'

"C. J. MATHEWS,

"A.T.T.W.I.A.C.M.C., &c. &c. &c."

A NEW CANZONET.

TUNE—"Here we go up."

Dear mother, don't kick up a row,
For my not doing what I was told;
But I'll not write from Birmingham now,
And why? why because I'm at Mold.
You'll stare I daresay when you knows
What kept me in London so long,

And as I'm not given to prose,
I'll just turn it into a song.

Mr. Smith, as you know well enough,
Was to take me to Holborn to sup;
But he wanted at nine to pack off,
Before I had time to pack up.
In his coach I'd a mind to make one,
Had he not wished so early to go;
But he said he was anxious to run,
Because he'd the gout in his toe.

Says Hook, "let him follow his whim
While we stop and finish our tea,
You can leave Austin Friars to him,
And come to Blackfriars with me."
Says I, "Well, I don't see the harm
Of posting to London with you;"
So Hook and I went arm in arm,
As hook and eye always should do.

Arrived at the George and Blue Boar,
We kicked up a deuce of a din;
A man peeped through the chink of the door,
But he swore he would not let us in.
Says I, "I'm come here for a snore."
Says he, "That I fear you can't do."
Says I, "Sure enough it's a *bore*,
But, by *George*, it was I that looked *blue*."

Said I, "I've a good mind to curse,
But no, 'twill be better I think
At the fellow to jingle my purse,
And bring him again to the *chink*."
The purse I had not long to hold,
Says I, "The job's done, Mr. Hook,
He's a lad that'll look to the gold,
I can see by the *guilt* on his look."

"You shall quickly be George and Blue Boar'd,"
Says he, "if you'll sleep as you are,
For you'll find that there's both bed and *board*,
If you'll sleep on a bench in the bar."
"Mr. Hook, then no more with these fools
Will I prate in this horrible drench;
If you find nothing hard in the rules,
I shall find nothing hard in the bench."

In the morning I rapped at Gray's door,
At six as I promised to do.
"Gaffer Gray," said I, "why do you snore?
And why does your nose look so blue?"
Said he, "Don't disturb me till nine,
As I don't think of starting to-day,
For the morn which I hoped would be fine
Like myself, has turned out Iron Grey."

It was settled to set off at three,
But we stopt on some beef to regale,
And at four I and good brother Gray
Set off in our habits of mail.
The fault you see wasn't with me,
And now I am come to a stand,
So with love to my honoured P.,
Believe me your son to command.

[These lines, in common with many others written by Mathews at about this period, are in the style of the Theodore Hook impromptus, which were so popular fifty years ago. As a specimen of Mathews's talents as a versifier later in life the following *jeu d'esprit* may be given. It was published in "Routledge's Annual" for 1867, and is reproduced here by permission of Messrs. Routledge & Sons.]

THE MAD ARITHMETICIAN.

I'm a mad arithmetician, and I live in Bedlam College,
And I'm death on calculation and experimental knowledge.
I've measured all the universe and summed up all creation,
And to benefit the world I now impart my information.

I've sounded with a plumb-bob ev'ry brood of little chickens,
And I've taken with a quadrant all the serials by Dickens;
And, dividing by the census of the parish overseer,
I find the product just amounts to twenty pounds a year.

I've counted on my fingers all the little twinkling stars,
And I've potted down the comets and their tails in earthen jars;
And subtracting thence the earthquakes which infest the Milky Way,
I find that their subscriptions all come due on quarter day.

I can tell how many singing birds can perch upon a tree,
Multiplying by the shipwrecks which occur each year at sea.
I can calculate the distance, by consulting with the moon,
From the lamp at Hyde Park Corner to the twenty-first of June.

I can tell the way Earl Richmond pierced the bowels of the land,
By observing Dent's chronometer that's stuck up in the Strand.
I have measured with a five-foot rod, the Muses and the Graces,
And I've reckoned up the period between Rome and Epsom races.

I can tell by my thermometer the proper hour to rise;
With my telescope, from Putney Bridge, I've seen the Bridge of Sighs.
By Dollond's best barometer, from error quite exempt,
I find newspaper strictures three degrees below contempt.

By using my theodolite I've levelled accusations
Against Meyerbeer's "Prophète," and against Cicero's "Orations."
I've dissected, with my microscope, the bones of Thomas Paine,
And I've galvanised with chloroform the late Sir Richard Mayne.

I brought up with a stomach-pump two thousand puns of Byron's,
And I baked them in an oven for the use of Dr. Irons;
And I melted in a crucible the works of Bulwer Lytton,
And they made a batter pudding for the Prince of Wales to sit on.

The light the sun gives ev'ry day's as light as any feather,
And the Tower guns are heavier than the heaviest of weather.
The broadest joke is not so broad as any railway gauge,
One blade of grass is twice as green as any green old age.

A pint of beer I find's as long as half a pound of tea,
And giant Chang's as high as High Church principles can be.
A flash of lightning wears as well as twenty kegs of whiskey,
And Threadneedle Street exceeds in width a storm in the Bay of Biscay.

A penny ball of string's as bad as two attacks of measles,
And a quart of turtle soup costs more than ten Sir Peter Teazles.
A shower of rain's more numerous than twenty Leicester Squares,
Nine Welsh wigs ain't as musical as two Italian *hairs*.

Take half-a-dozen babies and divide them with your knife,
Throw in a niece, two uncles, carry one and add your wife;
Then stir them well together—let them simmer by the fire—
And the dividend's as pleasing as a parent can desire.

One day while looking through my bars and gazing at the sky,
It struck me that a sermon must be heavier than a fly;
So I caught a country clergyman and furnished him with wings,
And he buzzed as well as any fly and eat as many things.

I hauled up in my fishing-net a great railway contractor,
And I hung him on a gibbet with another malefactor;
I then extracted all their steam—exhausting their receivers—
And I brought them back to reason by the aid of two retrievers.

I seized a pair of callipers and nipped a politician,
And I sweated him in blankets till I got him in condition;
Then I rode him for the Derby, in my boots and leather breeches,
And the people said they liked his running better than his speeches.

There's nothing I can't do, within the province of humanity;
I can sit out Phelps's "Manfred"—not that that's a proof of sanity.
I quite believe in spirits—though it does seem hard to me,
That I'm still confined in Bedlam, while the Davenports go free.

Now tell me, you sane people, am I not a "Tree of Knowledge?"
Don't I well deserve the epithet of "Pride of Bedlam College!"
To teach mixed mathematics there, but grant me your commission,
And you'll thus repay the labours of the "Mad Arithmetician."

CHARLES J. MATHEWS TO MRS. MATHEWS.

"Pontblyddyn, Saturday Night, 1825.

"My dear Mother,

"I am just returned from a week's sojourn at Flint, where I have been viewing some slate quarries and acting the man of business, and only now, on my return, receive your letter of July 26th, together with a packet of newspapers that will take me a fortnight to read, a letter from Louisa, and one from Mr. Phipps. I am very much annoyed at not being able to write to my father in time, but you must let me know again when he is stationary anywhere, that I may surprise him with a line or two. Your reproach about writing is unkind, for you know how completely my time is occupied the whole of the week, and how difficult it is for me to get any leisure even on Sundays, as those days are unluckily the only ones which we can devote to examining the accounts, surveying the buildings, arranging, &c. You can have no idea of the really hard work that it is, and of the number of things there are to think of for the different works. To-morrow fortnight I hope to put the roof on my house, and have to-night twenty cottages ready. Everything is going on quite right, and Mr. Gray is away; so far, I have nothing to complain of.

You ought not to scold me in any part of your letters, because the space would be so much more agreeably filled up with 'innocent prattle,' to amuse an exile in his solitude. I am living in a region of matter-of-fact, where a joke was never heard, and a pun is *pun*ishable by the laws. Pray bestow your charity. You must recollect, too, that all the little fun which floats occasionally on the surface of my fancy must all be carefully skimmed to pop into dear Louisa's letter, who would not be content, like you, with 'interesting nothings,' relating to myself. It is necessary to keep her in good humour and bear the postage cheerfully, by any little nonsense which may hit me at the time; but you I am sure of. I know that a dull letter will not make you love me the less, and therefore I, perhaps ungenerously, bestow all my tediousness upon you. Well, I will promise to be a little more sociable for the future, if you will, in return, give me a little more of *yourself* in your letters. I have seen such amusing epistles of yours upon all sorts of subjects—nay, upon no subject at all—to all sorts of people, and yet I verily believe out of the whole mass of your correspondence, while abroad and here, I could not find a single '*bonne motte* or *rapparty*,' worth recording in history. So you see if you attack me I shall turn upon you; so you had better shake hands and begin again. 'Blow me up and bully me' about the matter of my letters, and I may perhaps mend; but as to a greater frequency of writing, I really do say it

is impossible for an architect of eminence and great practice, such as he of the Welsh Mining Company, to write more than once a week upon unscientific subjects.

"I have been all the week in the most classical and poetical mood that you can fancy, but am obliged to return to a few dull realities now, which, though highly unpoetical, and sudden death to the Muses, are, nevertheless, very well in their way. My CORDUROYS, then, have more upon their hands than they can well perform, and request an extra pair may be immediately sent from Mr. Thingammy, opposite Exeter Change, and, as I am quite done on both sides, let all my summer clothing of every kind be sent with them, nicely packed with a pair of boots and a pair of braces, and my black evening trousers. Also, let David buy me some *Punk* from any tobacconist, which is a kind of substance like leather, for lighting the pipe, unknown in these savage parts.

"Believe me, my dearest mother, though I do write only once a week,

"Your truly affectionate Son,

"C. J. MATHEWS."

CHARLES J. MATHEWS TO MRS. MATHEWS.

"Pontblyddyn, August 13, 1825.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,

"I sit down positively in a gale of wind that almost rocks the old house like a pendulum. You have

no idea of the tremendous weather we have had for the last week—a series of most dreadful 'harricoes,' that have done all kinds of mischief, and, in spite of the vigilance of the police, the offenders have not yet been taken into custody. Trees have been cleft in twain, 'chimblay pots' thrown down, corn beat into the earth, and, as luck would have it, the foundations for my bridge just commenced. We have all been in a pretty pickle, but, happily, everything is preserved. I have had sad work with my bridge on account of the impossibility of arriving at a solid bottom to build on. I have been obliged to build upon piles, which is a great extra expense, but is a most secure method; so that now I believe I am quite out of danger, and no longer fear the fury of the contending elements.

"I have received a most characteristic letter from Gaffer Gray, from Newcastle-upon-Tyne, saying that he shall be home on Tuesday next, and 'shall be accompanied by three or four ladies, and wishes to know how many rooms will be ready to receive them. Tell me,' he proceeds, 'how all goes on, and whether the drawing-room is ready to paper, as I have engaged a man for the purpose next week.' Again: 'On Wednesday the billiard table will arrive from London, with a man to put it up, so I hope you will be quite prepared for it.' To show you how amusing this is, it is only necessary for me to add that there is yet no roof at all on the house. He concludes: 'Tell Roper I have bought a brood mare,

such a beauty!!! and above all have the four rooms ready.' Four ladies and a brood mare! Verily our cousin of Newcastle-upon-Tyne hath gone mad. We are doing wonders here and astonishing the natives with our celerity. I find that the busybodies in the neighbourhood have given a year and a half for the completion of all our undertakings, and will, no doubt, be much surprised at seeing them approaching to a close in November. Early in September I hope to spend a week with you at home, and I assure you I heartily long to see you all once more. I have not written to my father yet, but if you can say where he will be at the end of next week, and will inform me whether Jonathan praises or abuses England, I hope to send him a song of some kind, though really the subject is dreadfully worked upon. Is anything thought of for next year? I should much like to know what the subject is. . . .

"With best love to my father, believe me, my dearest mother,

"Your most affectionate Son,

"C. J. MATHEWS."

CHARLES J. MATHEWS TO MISS HOME PURVES.

"Pontblyddyn, August 14th, 1825.

"MY DEAR LOUISE,

"How do you do? Are you better? Have you got a house? *Will* you write to me? When do you go out of town? Is it to Tonbridge Wells? Is Lord

Blessington gone to Ireland? *Shall* you write to me? What news of Mr. Stewart? How is your mamma? When did you hear from America? *Won't* you write to me? How does the Italian go on? Do you continue drawing? Have you played my overture lately? *Shan't* you write to me? How is Mrs. Baker? Is Lord Auckland returned? Is Johnny gone to Eton? *Can* you write to me? Have you heard from Italy? What was the meeting between Lord B. and Tiny? Have you been to Kentish Town? *Couldn't* you write to me? How is the Speaker? How did Lord B. like Hook? What did the Duke of Sussex say and do? Have you been to the play? *Mightn't* you write to me? Is Mary quite well? How are her birds? Are the parrots alive? Does your godson thrive? *Oughtn't* you to write to me? Do you begin to be hearty and 'charming well again'? Do you eat voraciously? Do you drink like a fish? Do you sleep like a top? *Mayn't* you write to me? What sort of weather have you? Have you seen B. lately? *Would* you write to me? Did you dine at P.'s? Have you been to Vauxhall? How is Maraschino? WILL you write to me, and *soon?* Oh pray, dear young lady, *write, wright,* right, rite; do, doo, dou; pray, pra, prey doo.

In learning I'll soon be as good as my betters,
I'm such a good boy that I long for my *letters*
My moods and my cases are soon understood,
For when in good case, I am then in good mood.

But my *word's* not worth having and no one will take it
Unless I have plenty of *letters* to make it.
Some conjuror's *spell* is now all that is wanted
To force you to write, then should I be *enchanted*.
You know very well I'm no conjuror, am I?
So forced I shall be to apply to your mammy.
What then you will say we shall very soon see
When you find out that my case *accusative* be,
Come, send me some soon, without more interceding,
From *sp*[illegible] I then could proceed to the reading,
But now 'tis too true and I'm ready to swear it,
Whenever I'm *vocative* you're always *caret*.

"In answer to your desire of knowing the moral and political sentiments of Welsh miners, I can merely give you a few general ideas, for they are very reserved, and shy of affording such information. It appears to me then, from all I can gather on the subject, that they have ever been considered a highly moral and deep-thinking people; firmly upholding the British laws, and thinking that the hand of justice should be made of iron; showing a good example to their superiors in preparing each day to 'kick the bucket,' and return to their parent earth. They have been for many years staunch supporters of the *Pitt* system, but since Brougham has put it into their heads that they are as good as their masters, they have been anxious to establish a general level through the land, and the Pittites seem going down very fast. Their literary character does not stand high. Their writings in general are short and pithy, as they seem to agree that

'brevity is the soul of wit,' and I have frequently seen a name of fifteen syllables, to such an extent do they carry it, expressed with ease by a couple of strokes of the pen. A strong vein of irony runs through their works, and though the spelling is not quite consonant with our notions, you not unfrequently trace the keen satire of Steele, occasionally interspersed with the lively shafts of Coleman. If I can obtain any of their light works I will send you a specimen, but in the meantime I feel myself obliged (in desiring my best love to your mamma, Mary and Pettings) to subscribe myself with all due respect to your serene highness,

"Your ever truly affectionate

"CHARLES JAMES MATHEWS, A.W.M.C."

CHARLES J. MATHEWS TO MRS. MATHEWS.

"Pontblyddyn, August 21, 1825.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,

"*Viva, Viva!* ha, ha, ha! All's right and tight every way. But prudence, Mr. Thomas; let me begin regularly. I have received your *three* letters punctually. The first, containing Peake's sketch, I was delighted to get, as it is full time it should be begun upon. I like the idea, vastly, and enter into most of his hints, though some few I don't quite comprehend. I will, however, write to him as soon as I can, and say my say. I have already written *two* of the songs! I will

send them to him first. Jonathan's song I have not yet touched, but will send something or other for it to Birmingham. On Thursday, at twelve o'clock, I received the following: 'Oxford, Monday. Dear C. Mathews. On account of the weather we gave up Bristol, and the vessel does not touch at Swansea, which I mentioned to your mother. We sleep to-night at Warwick, to-morrow at Birmingham, and the next night at Llangollen, I suppose. I don't know where Mold is, but I should be glad to have a sight of you. Yours very sincerely, B.' At the moment I received this he had of course started from Llangollen; but as I had long meditated a trip to Bangor ferry, to see the new chain bridge, I thought this an excellent opportunity, and by going there from Mold, I should arrive before him. I instantly ordered my horse and trotted off to St. Asaph, a very pretty little place. I hadn't time to call on the Bishop, but proceeded without delay to Conway, saw the castle, *en passant*, beautiful scenery, mountains, &c., and arrived at eight o'clock at Bangor, fifty-three miles, and never in my life did I see so magnificent a thing as the bridge. It is well worth a journey from London. His lordship had passed two hours before, and as I was within twenty-five miles of Holyhead, I determined to leave my horse comfortable for the night, and proceed there; but owing to delays of all kinds, I did not arrive till two in the morning. 'Is Lord B. here?' 'Yes, sir.' 'That's all right,' said I. 'What time is he to be

called in the morning?' 'At four, sir.' After two hours' sleep I got up, and asking for the room where he was to breakfast, I entered, and found him asleep in his cloak on the sofa. I thought I would astonish him out of his sleep, and began: 'Early one morn a jolly brisk tar,' his favourite song. After getting through a verse, he rose, and to my horror I discovered—a *perfect stranger!* I instantly recollected that Comte D'Orsay and his aide-de-camp were with him, and in great confusion began: 'Pardon, monsieur, j'ai croyé que c'était milord, mille pardons, &c.' 'Ah,' said the stranger yawning, 'I was sure you were a Frenchman, sir, by your gaiety.' 'Mille pardons,' said I, and left the room in the character of a Mounseer Malbrook. I then went to Lord B.'s bedroom and knocked. 'Who's there?' 'Early one morn a jolly brisk tar.' 'By Jove, it's Mathews,' said his lordship, who was delighted to see me. I was introduced to Count D'Orsay* and Mr. Leon de Chimais and Charles Gardiner, breakfasted, and saw them off in the steam-packet. At seven I started again, but on arriving at Conway (in a pouring rain), my horse would not cross the ferry, and I was obliged to go ten miles round, and sleep at a little wretched Welch ale-house at Machdra. Here, after rubbing down my horse, myself, and bedding him up for the night, I exchanged Stulz for the suit of the Methodist landlord. Black coat with waist at my heels, flapped waistcoat and

* This was the elder Count D'Orsay.

knee breeches—a most capital disguise. Upon asking the girl if they had any books, she said: 'Oh yes, sir,' and with the greatest coolness brought me in a full-grown Bible, and a 'Discourse on the Great Law of Consideration.' To-day a letter has arrived from Mr. Barrett, M.P., and one of the Mining Company, who, in consequence of his satisfaction at what I am doing for Mr. Gray, 'requests my opinion,' and desires me to make him the plans for a house he means to build directly in Yorkshire. So you see, as I said, one thing leads to another, actual business is better than the honours of looking at a palace. Depend upon it, while I have business of a good kind, and can establish a reputation for myself, it would be leaving the substance for the shadow to give it up, and building on a false foundation. Had I no position of my own, Mr. Nash's office would be highly valuable; but refer to any architect you please, Mr. Nash himself if you will, and they will all confirm what I say. Mr. Nash, in short, himself particularly said to me: 'As long as you have business of your own, don't think of coming to me.' I shall lose no time in getting the plans ready, and shall do all I can to gain the approbation attendant upon planning designs. I have received dear Louisa's letter.

"My dear Mother,

"Your most affectionate Son,

"C. J. MATHEWS."

CHARLES J. MATHEWS TO CHARLES MATHEWS.

"Pontblyddyn, Aug. 22, 1825.

"MY DEAR FATHER,

"I had intended to have written you a long letter to-day, but you must accept the will for the deed, for I am so hurried now, as usual, that I shall not have time. I shall, however, be home for a week or so very soon after you are, that is, in the first or second week in September. I send you the song you asked of me, but I fear you will not find it what you expect. I have not pleased myself, as the subject is so worn. You may perhaps find one or two verses that will do, and the number of them will shew that my ill success has not been from want of will, but from a thick head, with which I shall always remain,

"Your affectionate Son,

"C. J. MATHEWS.

"P.S.—My only comfort is that the verses you sent me are certainly worse.

JONATHAN'S SONG.

Dear uncle, I'm this poetry to you I guess inditing,
To let you know what London be at this here present writing.
The men are not so brave as we, the women are much bolder,
The city's much the same as ours but uglier and older.

Cast iron, gas, and steam engines are too damned much the fashion,
Which puts the oil and watermen in a tarnation passion;
They've found how to consume the smoke which chimneys once gave vent to,
For as they never smoke themselves, their chimneys they'd prevent too.

They now no more by retail wash with soapsuds and old women,
But steam the clothes in wholesale boilers big enough to swim in;
And when I hear their dandy vans come rolling on behind me,
I think of home, so strongly they of *Washing-tun* remind me.

For ev'rything is done by steam in ev'ry situation—
They cook their victuals, drive their gigs, and rule their navigation;
The steamboats though, compared to ours, are most uncommon failures,
While sailors all blow up the steam, the steam blows up the sailors.

London Bridge is taken down, and not before it wanted.
A proper clumsy thing it was, by ev'ryone is granted.
They brag so of their Cockney bridge and clumsy piles they've driv for't,
But as to their fine coffer-dam—a damn I wouldn't give for't.

The Lord Mayor hires a large glass coach, the aldermen come after,
Who are twelve fat men in long gold chains, who serve as Butts for laughter.
The Mansion House they sit in to condemn the trembling sinner,
And he is thought the greatest man who eats the greatest dinner.

And when at Brighton or at Deal they take their summer station,
They ven'son eat considerable to fill their corporation.
Then their rural walks they take in groves of Box and Myrtle,
And Coo and Bill all day like doves—but all their doves are *Turtle*.

On Sundays in the Park are crowds of spry and active fellers,
And all like our Militia men with sticks and umberellers.

Both Beaux and Belles to show their shapes on prancing horses ride
Park,
For all is stare and show, in short it's any thing but *Hide* Park.

The river Thames is covered up with stones and bricks and mortar,
A river which *com*pared with ours is but a pail of water,
New York's ad*mir*able to behold, and all one's wonder rouses,
But London you can scarcely see, it's so chock full of houses.

This city's such a thriving place for pec- and speculation
That none of them can eat or drink without a calculation;
Five times five is twenty-five, five times six is thirty,
Five times seven is thirty-five, five times eight is forty.

(Written with a crowquill dipt in blacking on a green-baize cloth.)

"Write me a line to acknowledge the receipt of this before you leave Birmingham."

MRS. MATHEWS TO CHARLES J. MATHEWS.

"Mold, Nov. 9th, 1825.

"Your letter, my darling Charles, was delightful to me, as most of your letters are. It was written in that tone of mind that invariably conveys to me some of its own cheerfulness. Your happiness is so essential to mine that I can never feel independent of it. I am, however, most anxious to be assured that you have conquered those professional difficulties that some time ago oppressed you, and I trust, my beloved Charles, that you will take advantage of my present 'single-mindedness' to write every particular that you may find pleasing and desirable to communicate. Recollect participation is a relief to the person confiding and a

gratifying weight to the person selected to bear a share of the burthen of one beloved. Have you had any correspondence with the parties, and how near to some conclusion is the business? Pray satisfy me, as I sometimes, when my *dark hour* is upon me, fear your mind may be still anxious and uneasy.

"I dined on Monday in Berkeley Square. They are all pretty well. The Speaker has been very ill, but came in the evening tolerably recovered, yet I think not sufficiently so to be from home. He inquired with kindness after you. I delivered your message to Louisa. Dear, *dear Charles*, tell me all your real feeling about her, and I will with honesty advise and let you into the real truth of my own. She is a sweet, lovely, lovable girl, but I fear not stable in her attachments. Indeed, few girls of her age can be expected to be so, and she is a dangerous companion, as I always felt, to a young man of feeling and strong sensibility like yourself, whose heart is likely to be the greatest sufferer. Heaven grant that my excellent Charles may not be more seriously interested than he ought in any young woman's regard, where hers has had no trial. Indeed, my dearest Charles, you cannot yet even place dependence upon *yourself*, rational and consistent as you are beyond your years, and God grant you prudence enough to refrain from any serious attachment until your taste and opinions have a more lasting quality than at present it is natural for them to have. Early marriages invariably are more or

less unhappy, and seldom therefore are second marriages so, because the parties are better disposed to make with judgment their choice. This is all dull, matter-of-fact and commonplace, I own, but I must say something, and the truth needs no better form. I am solicitous about your happiness, my most beloved boy, and must sometimes show it."

CHARLES J. MATHEWS TO MRS. MATHEWS.

"Pontblyddyn, Nov. 13, 1825.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,

"Not until Thursday did I receive the parcel, and letter by the post at the same time, for the whole country here is flooded, and I have not had communication with Mold for some time, since when, what with snow, hail, rain, wind, water, and business, I have not been able to despatch a letter. The shirts, one of which I have on at 'this present writing,' are articles in the latest fashion and much approved. The European is indeed poor; even the articles you mention are of very slender merit in my opinion. The other *articles*, I mean the corduroys, are now 'such as gentle women do wear,' who are in the habit of using such things, and answer the purpose well. With regard to Pepys, I do not quite understand your injunction. You say I must send him back in a week, your letter being dated Friday, Nov. 4th. Now, as I do not get the parcel till Thursday, 10th, the time left for perusal is something like our book society's allowance;

'some rainy afternoon,' which considering the extracts you seem to hint at is rather scanty time for a large tough quarto. I shall, therefore, take a clear week from the time of its receipt, if I hear nothing to the contrary from you.

"The works at Heartsheath are now measured up to Oct. 29th, and are, as I expected, terrific. However, I rather suspect the prices are not so low as they should be, considering the price of labour and material in this country, and therefore shall not be satisfied until I engage a surveyor from Liverpool to come over and value it for me. Notwithstanding the row that will no doubt be made, I am not uneasy about it—at least, not so much so as I was some time back—as I have no doubt I shall be able to clear myself from half of the blame. The point is this: when it was found necessary to pull down double the quantity of old work that was originally intended, someone should have written to apprize the directors of what was intended. Now, had I been employed by the directors personally, I should doubtless have been the person upon whom this duty devolved; but as I am acting under one of these directors who is stationary here, for the purpose of inspecting the works and in daily correspondence with the board in London, and this resident sanctioning the extra work, surely it was for him to have acquainted the rest with what had been done, and upon this point the matter must rest. In another week, I rather think

Gray will be in London, when I hope something will be determined. It is not impossible that, there or thereabouts, I may also be there, as I wish to be present at the debates. In the meantime, I shall not make myself at all uneasy about the matter.

"I wish extremely to write to Lady Blessington, and will see if I possibly can during the week. . . With regard to Louisa, I can say nothing more than I have already said. Do not for a moment think that I am unhappy or dejected upon the subject, though it would be ridiculous in me to say that all the love and affection that I have so steadily borne towards her is totally extinguished by her coldness. I cannot but be hurt at the sudden loss of her affection, but, at the same time, nothing that she can now ever do can obliterate the friendship which I have ever entertained and ever shall towards her. If we gradually sink into common acquaintances, which seems fast approaching, I can only determine that I will never again be guilty of anything more than common civility to any of her sex, until the time arrives—which is very far off—when by industry I may be enabled to sustain, as I should wish, a wife chosen from among beings of my own rank. As to Louisa, I declare upon my honour I never indulged any other idea than that of the most tender affection, nor did I ever think of aspiring—even in my mind—to the possession of a person, whose family would consider themselves degraded by such an association, or, to put it in less harsh terms, who had

formed plans of a more exalted nature for the welfare of their darling child. Let her be as cold or unkind as she can possibly be, it is now too late. I can never cease to love her with fraternal affection. I conceive her to be everything that a girl should be, and if some portion of caprice is necessary to her nature, which I had always endeavoured to persuade myself was merely the prejudice of cynics, I console myself with knowing that it is not her fault but my misfortune. If any woman is allowed to be capricious, surely it must be that one who has amiable qualities and beauty sufficient to allow her her choice wherever she pleases. I can't express what I mean, but you know my heart, and will always believe me,

"Your truly affectionate Son,

"C. J. MATHEWS."

MRS. MATHEWS TO CHARLES J. MATHEWS.

"To Mold, Nov. 18, 1825.

"Your long letter was satisfactory—at least I will persuade myself so. You are a dear and excellent being, and ought not to be trifled with by anyone, and, to my heart and understanding, I find you equal, if not superior, to everyone I have yet known. But we will talk this over. I love Louisa, but it is with reserve; for she has more of the world about her calculations, I fear, than I believed and is natural or desirable at her

age.* Everything is for the best; of this I am firmly persuaded, and it is not what we feel on present occasions that can shake this belief. The future will decide. You must expect, my dear Charles, from much experience, frequent disappointments in respect to certain expectations of character in those whose outward seeming is fair, and as gold is itself tried only by fire, so must our feelings and the feelings of others go through an ordeal like that before we can separate the dross from the most valuable substance. We are neither good nor bad without some occasions to prove us one or the other. No passive life can avail to make us satisfied of merits—they are not negative, but positive, and must result from action. Louisa's mind and feelings are just

* Mrs. Mathews is not altogether just or strictly ingenuous in this letter. Louisa Purves and Charles Mathews were undoubtedly parted by the action of their respective mothers, Mrs. Purves looking for a better match than Charles, and Mrs. Mathews being greatly opposed to her son's marrying so young. Two letters from Miss Purves to Mrs. Mathews, written in the spring of 1825, abundantly prove that considerable pressure had been brought to bear upon her, and that Mrs. Mathews was a party to the arrangement. In one letter the young lady says: "I shall decidedly take your advice, and not show low spirits, and this both from pride and because giving way now when I am not very strong would very probably make me ill. There is but one objection among the many advantages to be gained from Charles not knowing that I have been spoken to." In the other letter, a few days later, she adds, "I saw Charles to-day. The meeting was less awkward than it would have been had he been aware that I had been spoken to." "Spoken to" is a significant phrase.

coming into play. I think she is ambitious—perhaps I am wrong. In any case, so that she does not further affect the happiness of one I esteem as well as love, I am indifferent to her desires, and shall be content to love her still for those qualities which doubtless she possesses, and are estimable in themselves, although not of a nature to suit with 'this her fair and outward seeming.'

"Pray tell me when it is probable I may behold your dear face once more, for I am again longing for you and cannot wait long. I cannot describe to you, my own darling boy, what I feel sometimes at your absence, and how deeply it affects me in those moments of gloom which will surprise me at the best of times. You have so many years been the sunshine of my atmosphere, that I languish for the want of your cheering influence. I have now been long, very long, without you, and want your renovating presence to make me feel that I am not solitary, as I sometimes think myself, when, by long absence or silence, I think I possess less of your affection than heretofore."

CHARLES J. MATHEWS TO MRS. MATHEWS.

"Edinburgh, December 30, 1825.

"MY DEAREST MOTHER,

"Although I really can hardly say what I have been doing to prevent my writing to you before, now I

really have been in such a constant state of occupation about something or other that I *really* have not been able. However, I *really* think that part of my labours will turn out not quite unavailing; I mean with regard to what I have written for the entertainment. My father says he likes it very much, and has begun to study the commencement up to the first song, which he assures me is so well that he will not alter a word for anybody. Peake's bits were received, and much approved, with the exception of one scene in high life. My father's confidence in us is a great encouragement to us to proceed, and I hope on the whole it will turn out successful.

"What do you think of our going to Abbotsford! won't that be a treat? We dined the other day with Mr. Constable, and I there had the *MS. Waverley Novels* in my hand!!!! What do you think of that, eh!

"My father wants to write a few lines, so I shall give him up the rest of this, and shall write again in the middle of the week. Remember me to Mr. Broderip, and all *them there* people as axes after a body. And believe me, my dearest mother,

"Your affectionate Son,

"C. J. MATHEWS,

"Aged 22 years."

CHARLES J. MATHEWS TO MRS. MATHEWS.

"Pontblyddyn, January 20, 1826.

"My dearest Ma,

"All things must have an end, and, therefore, at last my routings, and tearings, and hurryings, and flurryings have come to a stop, and here I am once more quietly seated in my Ferme Ornée. My father, being rather of a sedentary nature, contrived to send you a line or two from Abbotsford, but I found it impracticable. It wasn't that I was so completely occupied all the time, but I felt on the contrary a luxurious sort of do-nothing-ness upon me from the moment I entered the gates. It was a quiet sort of enjoyment, far more delightful than any active pleasure, and I felt that I could do nothing but—do nothing. I tried to write a bit of the entertainment, but I could make nothing of it. I began a sketch, but gave it up before I had half completed it. I tried to read, but could not fix my attention. In short, I was fixed by some enchantment within the walls of the library, without the power of stirring from it. It is one of the most beautiful things of the kind I ever saw. It is in imitation of those fine old oak chambers that Sir Walter is so fond of describing in his works, with a bold groined ceiling, also of oak, very much enriched with carved pendants and bosses, studded with ornaments and grotesque figures selected from the Abbeys of Roslyn and Melrose. The bookcases

are in the same character and material, and I fancy contain a pretty tolerable library. On the south side of the room is a very elegant oriel window, called oriel, of course, on account of its situation, breaking the room into one of those spacious and fanciful recesses that give such character to the architecture of the time. In one corner of the room I found several translations in French and Italian of the Waverley Novels, with his name to them. Next to this room, and separated by double doors, is the small study to which no one is allowed access but by his own desire. He took me into it, being an architect, to show me his comforts, and there I saw a mysterious sable black ebony bureau! doubtless containing the steam-engine, loom, water-wheels, or whatever machinery it may be with which he manufactures the patent novels. I took particular notice of everything in the room, and, if he had left me there, should certainly have read all his notes. On the table and about the floor lay several volumes of the *Moniteur*, and other French *journeaux*, and pamphlets with which he is assisting himself in his 'Life of Bonaparte;' at least so I conjectured, for he did not himself say anything about it. On the rug lay two thick sturdy MS. quartos, with blotting paper peeping out of each; and I certainly would have given a shilling to have opened them only for one moment, but I did not attempt it, as I thought Sir Walter might think it rude, and I knew he was not a man to receive money for it, so I reluctantly

abandoned the notion. Divided from the study by a corridor is the hall, or armoury, which is his particular hobby, and done under his own immediate direction, which is all I need say to convince you of its being quite perfect. All the rooms in the house, dining-room, drawing-room, &c. &c., are equally perfect in their peculiar styles. In short, all is enchantment where he is, and the whole house is a 'Romance by the author of "Waverley."'

"I have a good deal of commonplace discourse which I must keep till Saturday, as it won't come in with *éclat* by the side of Abbotsford. Ever, my dearest ma,

"Your affectionate Son,

"C. J. MATHEWS."

CHARLES J. MATHEWS TO MRS. MATHEWS.

"Jan. 20. "Pontblyddyn, sent Jan 21, 1826.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,

"After your letter was despatched last night my father's was brought me, having been detained two days on account of the snow. It is dated 'Newcastle, Saturday,' and begging me to write to him there before he left, little thinking that I should only arrive here on Tuesday night. I'm afraid he must have been very uneasy at not hearing from me in answer, but as he is now at home he will have read my yesterday's letter, which will set all to rights. I will now give you a little bit of my

journey. On arriving at Selkirk from Abbotsford (five miles in a very unsociable sociable, made of cane with 'interstices at the intersections' to admit the wind) I was taken out half frozen and put by the inn fire till the mail came by. In an hour the mail arrived with room for 'one outside,' which I delicately declined, although the sun was shining in all its glory. I thought a night outside was not the thing, not by no means, so I determined to wait another hour till the heavy coach should make its appearance. Upon my asking in a faltering tone 'was there room?' the coachman told me to my great surprise (though to outward view he was like other people) that he had '*two insides.*' 'This is the coach for me,' thought I, 'we shall be sure to fare well on the road with a man who has two insides;' so into one of them I got and found myself not in his, but in the coach's body. Away we went as fast as the snow would let us, and as warm as could be (which was but cold enough). Keeping ourselves as snug as we could, I and three other ladies in the straw, we thought ourselves very lucky in only having to shift coaches four times before we reached Carlisle. None of them had been aired, I am sure, nor slept in for some time, but we were obliged to be our own warming-pans and keep our feet on the opposite seat against the pan. About two in the morning we reached Carlisle in a most deplorable condition, and were shown into rooms without fires, and, what is worse, without the capabilities for receiving

any. I never felt the cold so intense in the whole of my life, and the other ladies said the same, though one of them owned that she had seen sixty winters, and had her head constantly covered with snow. The roofers were obliged to stop at Langholm and give it up, but the coachman and guard declared that as long as their insides were full they could go on very well. In the morning at four o'clock we were summoned from our feathered—no, horse-haired nests, into an iced coach and horses like the discovery ships. Away we went once more, the wheels cracking and cutting down the ice ruts with a sort of ice-sickle all the way. We hadn't gone above two miles before the lady who sat next me said: 'Will you accept of a magnesia lozenge to correct the acidity of your stomach?' I declined her polite offer, but the other ladies accepted it, and all three sat correcting their acidities for about three miles. There I began to be interesting, for whether from the heat, or the cold, or the want of nourishment, I communicated to them my decided intention to faint, and begged them to conclude the affair as speedily as possible, which by dint of correcting my acidity and rubbing my skin off with lavender they most skillfully* accomplished. Going out of Preston, where by-the-bye the whole coach was thrown into the greatest confusion from hearing that 'Miss Foote was dining at The Black Bull,' we broke down

* A foot-note to this letter remarks: "You may send me back one of these *I*'s if you have no use for it, when you write again."

and had a pleasant lounge of an hour and a half out of the coach in the snow till the spring was repaired. The guard said it was owing to the badness of the roads, but in my opinion it was owing to Miss Foote's dining at The Black Bull. We had nearly taken the chill off again, when at Ormskirk both doors were wrenched open at once, the wind seizing the opportunity of rushing through us all, and upon demanding what had happened, two little urchins shrieked out: 'Do you want any Ormskirk gingerbread?' We added some spice to their gingerbread, and managed to arrive at Liverpool by ten o'clock on Saturday night. There I was obliged to stop for a surveyor, lay in bed all Sunday, spent all Monday upon business, started on Tuesday morning, reached Chester on Tuesday night, was detained on business all Wednesday, and only got my father's letter in time for to-morrow, this not being a post day. 'And so now.'

"To-morrow Mr. Gray and I go to Liverpool about this surveyor, return on Monday, on Wednesday get to Shrewsbury, and on Thursday start for home, where I shall stay a fortnight with my father's consent, being obliged once more (though for the last time) to return here. You shall hear again before I start.

"Give my best love to my father, and believe me ever, my dear mother,

"Your most affectionate Son,

"C. J. MATHEWS."

CHARLES J. MATHEWS TO MRS. MATHEWS.

"Pontblyddyn, March 16, 1826.

"My dearest Mother,

"The accounts of the success of the entertainment are very delightful, that is to say those of yourself, my father, and Mr. Broderip. Those of the papers I cannot say much for, as far as regards the paltry writers. However, as long as my father finds the whole thing go well and has good houses, I want no other criterion to go by. My pleasure you may easily imagine to be extreme, after sending a man to Chester on purpose for my letters, in order that I might get them four hours sooner than by allowing them to come on to Mold, by a mistake of his the post left Chester before his arrival, consequently I did not even get them so soon as usual by an hour and a half. Well, the man who fetches Mr. Roper's letters, knowing of the messenger I had despatched to Chester, did not enquire for mine at the post, but brought Mr. R.'s paper without any for me. This was provoking enough, to say the least of it, but now comes the most pleasing part. This paper, a three days a week one and called *The Evening Mail*, gave me great encouragement by the following incidental phrases. 'Nothing is more terrible than fifth-rate, trite jokes, far-fetched quibbles, and a perpetual, tantalizing affectation of point which the writer is always aiming at and never reaches.' 'The long affair with the eight

little children is almost as great a bore in the description as it would be in the reality.' 'All the songs are bad without exception.' 'The interlocutory dialogue as a composition is paltry.' 'There is a great deal that is horribly tedious,' &c. &c. &c. All this before your letter assured me that all was right. I am as anxious now to see it as I was before to hear of it, but I cannot set off before Monday week at the soonest. Gray is at length returned, and we commence operations if possible on Monday next, which will last about a week. I rather think I shall be obliged to go to Liverpool on Saturday, in order to expedite the business, as there is the greatest difficulty here with regard to surveyors.

"I have just heard from Gray what I consider a clencher with regard to Elmes, and completely agrees with the gentlemanly conduct I always gave him credit for. Gray says that when in town, he showed my sketch of his lodge to Elmes and told him that I was then making him a design for two small cottages, &c. Elmes didn't answer a word, listened to all he said with attention, and a day or two afterwards sent Gray a couple of designs of his own, as a present. What do you think of that for a respectable architect to the Ægis Fire and Dilapidation Company? Gray seems extremely flattered by his attention, and I would not for the world let him know in what light *I* consider the favour.

"The military are still in Mold, and the rioters

are determined not yet to give up. They threaten Gray with vengeance for bringing so many foreigners into the country, and are determined to destroy Hearts-heath. I wish they would. Give my best love to my father and congratulate him on his success. If he's content I must be, altho' *The Herald* thinks 'The Two-penny Post' the 'worst song he ever sang and unworthy of him.' God bless the Regent and the Duke of York.

"Your most affectionate Son,

"C. J. MATHEWS."

CHARLES J. MATHEWS TO MRS. MATHEWS.

"Pontblyddyn, April 9, 1826.

"MY DEAREST MOTHER,

"I have deferred writing until to-day in the vain hope of having something settled to communicate respecting my return to dear home; but, alas! these men of iron (I don't mean to call them *pigs*) are as unyielding as their own metal, and will not 'relinquish my leg.' Their surveyor, I am sorry to say, is still only expected, nor can I say exactly when he will arrive. I should most decidedly have been off home *ventre à terre* long ago, but that it has been put to my feelings and generosity to remain until this learned Theban of theirs comes, because my presence and assistance in pointing out the old and new work, extras and etceteras, may, and I hope will, dock the bill of eight or nine hundred pounds, which is rather an object than other-

wise. Independent of which I feel that my character is at stake if I allow the amounts to be paid which at present are demanded, and in short I think it is my duty to remain. I am sure, my dear mother, you will believe me when I say that this protracted stay of mine is a cause of the greatest uneasiness to me, both on my father's and your account, knowing as I do your desire to have me at home again, and on account of my engagements, so long deferred, with Mr. Nash. Indeed, the latter reason is even the strongest, because I am well aware that you—confident as you must be that my anxiety to be with you is fully equal to your desire of having me—would be much more unhappy if I were to commit any breach of duty to arrive at what in that case would be a source of no gratification to any of us. Whereas with Mr. Nash it is different: he neither knows nor cares what causes I may have for remaining, but only judges of the length of time that has elapsed since I promised to be with him. I would have written him a line or two but that he might think the thing not worth my troubling him with, and, therefore, I have refrained. Now, if you think it wouldn't bore my father some fine morning, to give Sir John a little gentle exercise before dinner, and whisper a few words of 'soft nonsense' in Mr. Nash's ear, why I only say, *tant mieux*. I wish I were a moralizer. I could so compare human life, you can't think. I have often thought of writing a poem like Rogers, on the subject. How frail

are all human wishes! how unsatisfiable are our desires! Are we not completely the children of circumstances? We are indeed too much so.

> Here lies the body of Betty Boden,
> Who would have lived longer but she *co'den*;
> Oh Death! you are he who will take us too fast,
> And it was her bad leg that killed she at last.
>
> (Wrexham Churchyard, April 4th.)

"As I was at Chester on Thursday night, and the theatre was open, I went with some friends to see it. Miserable as usual. Decamp the worst of the worst, and Mrs. Decamp taking the money at the doors. A little bit during 'A Day after the Wedding' I thought exceedingly unsophisticated. After Miss Rock, as the bride, had sung her song twice, Decamp, her husband, went on, as I suppose is the custom, for I don't know the piece, to find fault with the way in which she executed the last part of it, and made her try it in several ways. She at last declares she cannot sing it better, and he insists that she must try, till at last a man shouted from the gallery, in the most energetic manner, and highly expressive of his pity for her: 'Damn you, can't you be easy with her!'

"Hoping to get a letter from you to-night, and hoping to be able to give you better accounts in a day or two, I remain hoping,

"Your ever most affectionate hopeful Son,

"C. J. M."

CHARLES J. MATHEWS TO MRS. MATHEWS.

"Pontblyddyn, April 30th, 1826.

"MY DEAREST MOTHER,

"Your letter on the subject of my 'crimes' and 'offences' arrived the day before yesterday, and I have only waited until I had something settled to communicate before I wrote in reply. Anyone to read your letter would suppose that I was a malefactor of the worst description, and had knowingly and intentionally given the finishing stroke of ruin to myself and all my family. I am sure whenever I hear the name of a bill I shall turn pale with fright, and tremble at the recollection of my guilty conduct. No one would suppose, to look at me, that I could have perpetrated so black a deed. I really dread to go out of doors for fear I shall be pointed out with horror by parents to their children as a regular rawhead and bloody bones, as the frightful wretch who 'put his name to a bill.' But still it appears to me that there remains some gleam of hope that the affair is not quite so irrecoverable as it is represented. It certainly does strike me, I may perhaps be too confident, but it will suggest itself to me that as it is the first 'crime' of this nature that I have committed, that I am not yet quite incorrigible, that my ruin is not entirely irretrievable. I cannot help imagining: I may be wrong, but so it is: that from the manner in which the affair has been treated, from the serious admonitions that I

have now so repeatedly received, the chances are that the thing will *never* happen a second time, should this one 'offence' have not completely overwhelmed us with ruin and blighted my future prospects entirely and for ever. I cannot help rejoicing that my name happens to be Charles instead of William, for I should be kept in perpetual uneasiness and misery by the endearing appellation of Bill. I have not been able to see Gray since the arrival of your *bill-et* (not *doux*) but will make another effort before I send this off. I had, however, a conversation with him upon the unfortunate circumstance a day or two before, when he begged me to write to Mr. Stephenson for the bill, as the money could not be paid without having the bill as a receipt. The reason of the money not having been paid when in London, Mr. Gray tells me, is, that the bill was not at Mr. Stephenson's, but that as soon as I receive it from London the money shall be forthcoming. In other cases a receipt is taken for a bill, but in this the bill must be taken for a receipt. In short I hope and trust that the whole business will end as it should do, and that the frightful forebodings of repeated 'crime' and blasted prospects will be dispelled by the cheerful rays of sincere repentance.

"I now come to what is to me of more moment than all the bills in the world, because the simple explanation from my father, you, Mr. Broderip, and Mr. Stephenson, of the consequences attendant upon bills would have

been quite enough to prevent my ever attempting it again. I require no more persuading from it, but what I am now upon is my return home. Your letter directed to be returned if I had started, showing that you were in hopes that I was at Stony Stratford at the least, makes me fear to say how much longer it must be deferred. Mr. Jones is just arrived from London, where he has been chiefly on my account to see what they really meant by the delay, the cause of which he finds to have been the impossibility of finding anyone whatever who could undertake the task. The consequence is, that the whole business is again thrown upon my hands, which I cannot say in one sense I am at all sorry for. In the first place it shews them that they are obliged to take my advice, and in the second saves a great additional expense. Now as I do consider that my giving complete satisfaction to so large a body as the Welsh company is a very great consideration as a connection, and that the drawing down so many persons' dissatisfaction would be even worse than 'putting my name' to ONE bill, I hesitate not a moment in undertaking anything which my interference could render service to. The thing now depends then entirely on myself, and therefore I can make the period of my return certain. Now mind. In the first place, I have time to consider on the Shakspeare monument, for which I have made a sketch or two. Secondly, I shall be able to set my public house, which I am building for Gray, in good

train. And thirdly, I shall be able to get quite free from the Welsh company, which (I shall be wretched till I get your reply) will, I hope, as much as possible, reconcile you to the idea of my not leaving this place until to-morrow (Monday) fortnight. I would not see your face nor hear my father's disappointment expressed for worlds. You must recollect that is fully as great to myself as to you, and therefore make every allowance. You may depend upon it, it will be better in the end. I shall say no more upon the subject, for I cannot make it a bit more palatable. All I can say is only making better of the bad. And so I'll set up a loud laugh and leave it. . . .

"Give my best love to my father, write immediately, and believe me ever, my dearest mother, though I have put my name to a bill, your ever most affectionate son, who is never going to put his name to a bill again,

"C. J. MATHEWS.

"*P.S.—I never mean to put my name to another bill.* I have just been over to Mr. Gray, who begs I will give his best compliments to you, and say that while you have been attacking him you ought to have been thanking him, for he has delayed sending the money on purpose to frighten me and deter me from 'putting my name to a bill' in future. He begs me to assure you that he has taken all the responsibility of the bill upon

himself, and that you are not to be any longer uneasy about it. Not a bad story I think. 'Cunning Isaac.'"

MRS. MATHEWS TO CHARLES J. MATHEWS.

"May 2, 1826, *Home.*

"Your letter, my dearest Charlie, is certainly a *settler.* I have given it into your father's hand, who is now reading it in the garden. He is just come in, and not in the best humour. Your not returning is a subject of great, *great* annoyance. He justly considers you are losing golden opportunities for worthless considerations. With regard to the *bill*—it is a *true bill* that your father finds *no joke*, the money having been really abstracted from his banker's; and if he wanted it ever so much he has it not. He *has* wanted it. Therefore, my dear Charles, however you may try to make a laugh of the business, *we* laugh perforce, as it is vulgarly but expressively called, on the *wrong side of our mouths.* . . . . In short, it is a very shabby business, and your father is extremely angry at the excuse, which has made Mr. Gray's fault no worse by its utter want of plausibility. He must think you and us all fools. Pray, my dear Charles, induce him to replace the money immediately, or I can see a rupture. In the next place—on the subject of money—this is a tender period. The dissolution of Parliament, threatening the close of the English Opera, holds out a sad, sad loss; I tremble at it, and have

other losses which I anticipate also. In short, your protracted stay and other perplexing concerns harass my mind much, and I hope you will not allow yourself one hour beyond the *terribly distant* period named, away from home. And here ends the subject, which if *I* were inclined to treat jestingly, your father's serious annoyance—justly and reasonably felt—would convert my laugh into a cry. You are at that happy period of life when, for want of knowing the responsibilities which attend maturer age, you are unable to feel for them. Of this be assured, if I write anxiously to you upon such points, I have a twofold reason, which relates equally to your ultimate welfare, *through us*, as to our own present convenience; and you may be satisfied that I withhold, rather than exaggerate, the consequences and feelings attending such circumstances, being desirous to encumber your young mind as little as possible with premature care. I expect a little party to-day; am not quite in cue for it, a continuation of cold plaguing me. I am, of course, a little depressed at the disappointment your letter brings, and I am aware that your gaiety is more assumed than real. You would kindly appear unmoved by the harass we all severally feel on the occasion of your prolonged stay—partaking of it equally —*only oblige me by writing oftener* during the rest of your stay, and believe me, my dearest Charlie,

"Your affectionate Mother,

"A. M.

"P.S.—Let me assure you again and again, my beloved Charles, that I never write in *anger* to you, or with an intention (much less a wish) to distress you in any way. So pray take my meaning right, and do not let an ill-constructed phrase deceive you into a belief, or even momentary suspicion, that I have any feeling but that of devoted love and solicitude for you, my excellent and dear boy. . . .

"Dear Charles, you may joke as much as you please, but it is a shabby trick of Gray, and I hope you will make him cash up before you come home. . . . When the money is paid I will read your letter over again and laugh—for it would be very funny, if *the money* were paid. But for all Mr. Gray cared, you and I might both have been arrested, and if I had not had money at Stephenson's, which I had not a month before, you would have been arrested; therefore all your mother said was right. You cannot yet perceive that it is a grievance—you seem determined to be blind—that the money should have been paid in February and this is May. Mr. Gray's excuses are very good for you, but not for me."

CHAPTER VIII.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY—SECOND VISIT TO ITALY, 1827.

In Nash's office, at all events, I saw plenty of work, and had my fair share of it. Nash was an extraordinary man. With great ability and wonderful perseverance in the face of every conceivable difficulty, he not only laid out Regent Street and designed the Regent's Park, with all its terraces and ornamental gardens, but carried them through in an incredibly short space of time—mainly, of course, owing to my invaluable co-operation, I having assisted in making out the works, drawings, and perspective views of the buildings he designed. His architectural talents were not of the highest order; his genius lying less in classical detail than in bold conception and general arrangement; but the amount of work he planned and executed is hardly to be believed. It is true the material he employed favoured expedition. If Nero's boast was that he found Rome brick and left it marble, Nash's boast might have been that he found London brick and left it stucco. Besides, he never stopped at trifles, or bothered himself about minor difficulties. If a column or a window was found on

being drawn from his measured sketch to be a foot or two too much to the right or the left, he would say: "Never mind, it won't be observed in the execution." He would order a number of cast-iron columns, such as those which originally were used for the Quadrant, but were subsequently removed to give more light to the street, and bring them into a dozen other designs, saving thereby much trouble and expense, and he would laughingly declare that "no one would know them again." In the numerous country mansions, however—mostly of the castellated character—that he erected, the "comfortable" was always thoroughly considered and "effect" most happily achieved; while his great taste and talent in landscape gardening enabled him not only to select the most appropriate sites, but to "aid nature" in embellishing them. His own house in Regent Street and his castle in Cowes, combining luxury and comfort, were excellent specimens of his skill, and were the perfection of domestic architecture. Killymoon, the seat of Colonel Stewart, at Stewarts Town, in the North of Ireland, is one of his most successful efforts on a grand scale.

It was rather a droll state of things. I still retained my office in Parliament Street and my clerk, and undertook whatever small matters dropped in; and to the eyes of the world had all the appearance of an architect in full practice, while I was quietly working away in the humble capacity of clerk in the office of another.

Every morning before I occupied my stool at Nash's, I prepared the daily work for my own clerk, and then vanished till four o'clock. He knew I was engaged in some way out of doors, and whenever I happened to be employed in the works at Buckingham Palace or the Regent's Park, I always made some excuse for sending for him, that he might see the important avocations which absorbed so much of my time.

One work of some magnitude was entrusted to me during this period. I received a commission from the son of an old friend, a solicitor in first-rate practice and well-known in fashionable society, to prepare plans and designs for an extensive West-end market, to be erected at the bottom of Oxford Street, on the site occupied then (and still) by Meux's brewery. The ground was, I was informed, already purchased, and a large sum of money ready to be expended. Delighted with the idea, I went to work with a will, for the elevation was to be ornamental as well as useful, and would form a striking termination to Oxford Street; sure, if well carried out, to be an important feature, and shed lustre upon the architect. I will not dwell upon the details of this undertaking; the marchings and counter-marchings; the visits to the markets of Liverpool and Paris; the hours spent in the shambles of Leadenhall, and the sweet-smelling purlieus of Billingsgate; the meetings of committees; the attendance on boards; the worry and turmoil I went through; but will merely say that my designs were

accepted, and I was ordered to have the general plan and elevation lithographed, for exhibition to the public and for distribution among the committee and shareholders. All went on well, and the working drawings were getting forward, when on a sudden came a hitch, then a block, then total stagnation; the committee dwindled; the board dropped off; and at last the whole scheme, like fifty other bubbles of that day, dissolved, and like the baseless fabric of a vision, left not a wreck behind.

This, by-the-bye, was not strictly true, for it left me behind. I was the wreck, and while my friend, the fashionable solicitor in high practice, walked off scathless with his hands in his pockets (they had been for some time in other people's), disappearing altogether not only from this company but from every other, I was left to pay the piper—I mean the lithographer, for the printing of my highly-successful accepted design. Two or three more such successes would have ruined me.

My evenings were still my own, and they were devoted to literary and dramatic pursuits. In conjunction with Richard Peake, the popular dramatist, I was constantly employed in providing material for my father, and on my own account contributing papers to the magazines and annuals, and writing pieces for the theatres, such as "Pong-wong," "Pyramus and Thisbe," "Truth," "My Wife's Mother," "The Wolf and the Lamb," "The Court Jester," &c. &c.

At length I began to weary of this uncomfortable state of things. Nash certainly had given me the run of his office, and accepted, as a matter of course, all the work I could do for him in return, but beyond an occasional nod and a "How are you, youngster?" I never received a word of advice or instruction from him during the twelve months I worked hard for him (for myself I suppose he called it), and at last I grew tired of it.

The following letter to my father explained my feelings and views, and suggested the plan I proposed to be adopted to free myself from my anomalous position:

CHARLES J. MATHEWS TO CHARLES MATHEWS.

"Parliament Street, March 10th, 1827.

"MY DEAR FATHER,

"I have waited till your entertainment should be fairly out before I ventured to engage your attention, as I want as much of it as you can possibly grant me; and as I well know you cannot listen to long stories, I have preferred writing upon the subject.

"I am certain you must see—though not quite so clearly, perhaps, as I do myself—that, so far from making any improvement, or gaining superior knowledge in my profession, from my present occupations, I am leading an almost idle life. There is nothing at all going on at Mr. Nash's which can do me the slightest good; and as to himself, so far from giving me anything

to do (independent of his having five *protégés* of his own) he does not even know me by sight, or ever make the slightest inquiry about me. You are at a great expense for my chambers and clerk, which common policy requires me to keep up for the sake of appearances, and without a chance, I am certain, from the usual course of things, of my getting any employment for a year or two. The plain fact is, people will not employ very young men; and I must wait my time patiently, as others of my profession do.

"Now, therefore, is the time to take advantage of the connections I have formed, and the knowledge I have gained abroad, and make my professional tour to Italy, a step which of course you have long decided as necessary at some period or other. Since my return from Naples I have got all my notes in order, and made every preparation for the tour, and may confidently say I shall go with greater advantages than perhaps any young man ever did. This Welsh business has the more impressed the necessity upon my mind, by showing me how deficient I am in that kind of knowledge which is only to be acquired by the investigation of the buildings of Italy and Greece. Should I once get involved in business, the accomplishment of the tour would be rendered impossible, as the regrets of too many architects can bear witness. Now, I sacrifice nothing; I break up no connection; I give up no business. I spend the time, which would here be lost, with immense advantage to myself,

both with regard to the acquisition of knowledge and the making myself a name, without a single counterbalancing disadvantage, and a great diminution of expenditure. Should any important work be proposed, in which you, through your interest, could find an opening for me, in my absence, one month will put me on my road home again.

"You now are at an expense for my general outlay, clerk and chambers included, of nearly £400 per annum, besides my horse's keep and my own. The utmost expenditure that can be required in Italy is £250. I have undertaken, in the event of my going, two works, at the request of Mr. Weale, the architectural bookseller, to be published on my return, and I trust I shall do myself credit by them.

"This plan has not been hastily conceived, for I have long suffered great uneasiness of mind at the slight shade the Welsh affair may have thrown over my professional character. I have talked frequently with my mother upon the subject, and at length she seems inclined to waive all her own feelings at again parting with me, being convinced, as I am, of the expediency of the tour I meditate; the more particularly, as Mr. D'Egville has determined on pursuing this plan with James immediately, who only waits for a companion to join him whose studies are directed to the same objects. The bare possibility of my accompanying his son seems to give him additional anxiety for his

commencing the journey without delay. He approves my mentioning his wish that we might go together, when we might be mutually serviceable. You know his talent, and I believe it would be of the greatest advantage to me; and Mr. Broderip, to whom I mentioned my wishes on the evening I went to Scotland, will confirm the absolute necessity, when I *do* go again to Italy, of my having a companion of similar age and profession. Indeed, this is quite *technical.*

"In my various conversations with Mr. D'Egville, it has been judged possible and necessary that we start in the first or second week in April. To this nothing is wanting but your consent. My chambers will of course be given up, and my clerk also. But of this, and all else, I shall be happy to talk with you now that the ice is broken, and the principal amount of my uneasiness is revealed. My bane and antidote are both before you, and I ardently hope, my dear father, you will see that there is reason in my wishes, and advantage in realising them. I am now, or never, at an age to know how to take care of myself, both in a moral and worldly point of view. Trust to my prudence, and believe that my affection for yourself and my mother, and my constant anxiety for your happiness, will ensure it upon all occasions.

"Your affectionate Son,

"C. J. MATHEWS."

My proposition was entertained and approved. A

consultation was held with Mr. Nash and other competent authorities as to the best course to be pursued. Information was sought from every source, notes were made, letters of introduction procured to the most eminent professors in the various scientific academies abroad, and with my friend D'Egville, an intelligent and congenial companion, who had been my fellow-student at Pugin's and my earliest chum, I prepared to start once more, full of hope and pleasant anticipation, for Italy, Greece, and Egypt.

On the 30th of April, 1827, with light hearts and buoyant spirits, we left London on our grand tour. I shall never forget the rapture with which we kicked the English dust from our feet, and like a couple of balloons, whose strings have just been cut, rose into the heaven of independence, left the prosy earth beneath us, and soared into the realms of illimitable space.

We arrived at Dover at eight o'clock, having left London at ten, for it was then a journey of ten hours instead of two, and after dinner walked on the pier by moonlight, talking over times past, present, and to come; discussing our various projects, and building what seemed at the time castles in the air, but which were destined not only to be realised but far surpassed.

Here are a few lines I find penned before going to bed that night. They form part of a journal in

verse, I kept for my mother's amusement during my first twelvemonth abroad.

Dover, Evening.

Why! are my senses by a dream deceived,
Or has the parting really been achieved?
For so impossible a thing it seems,
So like the fleeting incidents of dreams,
That hang me if I'm sure, it puzzles so,
Whether I can believe in it or no.
What! can my father really be content?
And then my mother, can she, too, consent?
To see me part, without a single soul
Of habits grave to govern or control;
To know that two or three years, at the least,
Must I be absent, roving here and there,
As Fancy takes me—to the south or east,
To Greece, or Italy, or God knows where?
They who have now employed so many years
In tending o'er me with such anxious fears;
Anticipating e'en my slightest wish,
Down to the cooking of a favourite dish;
And can they let me go? My mother, too,
Whose more especially the task is—who
From the first infant months of cross existence
Has nursed me to my present plump consistence;
And even now, though grown too big to dandle,
Still gives advice to "take care of my candle,"
"Put the fireguard on," and "not read in bed;"
Motherly scraps, which don't do to be read,
And e'en the saying which won't do in others,
Being the bland prerogative of mothers.
(Poor mothers! after all the pains they've had,
I must confess myself it is too bad,
That *we*, the very objects of their cares,
Should take to laughing at them for their fears.

But so it is. As long as we are babies
We all are good, and never quiz our mother,
But as we grow up we become such gabies,
We must be laughing at one thing or other.
Not that there's any harm, I hope. Oh no!
I'd not grieve her to whom I owe my birth;
Rather I'd jokes for evermore forego
Than hurt the being I love best on earth.
I merely give these small maternal traits,
To show her as deserving of all praise;
Since, with such habits grafted on her nature,
To lose me thus, the sacrifice is greater.
Having explained which, I will finish this
In truth, inordinate parenthesis.)
Where was I? And where am I? Oh, at Dover,
With all the bitter pangs of parting over.
How strange it seems, how singular the plight,
A state made up of sorrow and delight.
I can't well laugh, but then I do not sigh,
For though I cannot laugh, I cannot cry!
And wherefore should I, when the point is gained,
And all my dearest wishes are attained?
How many tedious years I've longed for this,
And pictured it the summit of all bliss!
All that the fondest fancy could suggest
Is realised at last, and I am blest;
Blest in the thought that, all the slaving past,
I've reached the long sought liberty at last.
How often have we lain (my friend and I),
Talking the future over with a sigh;
With Italy and Greece viewed in the light
Of fabled Paradises, too unearthly bright,
Too wondrous beautiful in seas and skies,
E'er to be seen by our apprentice eyes!
But now the scene is changed, the fetters drop,
And with them all the drudging of the "shop."

We go, then, forth at last, both led by Fame on,
And as to friendship—Pythias and Damon.
Ye gods! then, will ye never give us day?
"My soul's in arms and eager for the fray."

After a few days in Paris, making purchases and completing our sketching apparatus, selecting knapsacks, and buying lots of things we wanted and lots of things we didn't want, we secured our places outside the dilly and started for Geneva, a journey then of five days. At Les Rousses, a little town on the Jura mountains, we left the diligence and our luggage to go by St. Cery, and determined to walk to Geneva, in order to enjoy the splendid views of the lake and the Pays du Vaud, and were amply repaid for our toil; the view from Gex especially surpassing all that can be imagined for beauty and extent. We reached Geneva on a beautiful bright Sunday evening. All the town was out in holiday attire, and we were stared at in wonder, as we sneaked through the public promenade, among the gay throng, footsore, dusty, and exhausted, after our fatiguing walk to the Hôtel de la Balance, then the principal inn, where, while waiting for dinner, we threw ourselves, accoutred as we were, upon a couple of benches, and fell asleep. At ten o'clock we awoke, sleep having taken the place of hunger—*qui dort dine*—and, leaving the repast untouched, we went straight to bed.

In the morning we set out in search of a more

moderate lodging, the Hôtel de la Balance being too expensive, and Secheron, where I had sojourned, *en prince*, three years ago, with Lord Blessington, still worse, when, by accident, we came upon a delicious little rural inn, by the lake side, called the Hôtel de la Navigation, with wooden balconies looking on the water, and as retired as if it were a private house. We found nice large clean bedrooms and a spacious airy sitting-room, and we at once took possession. Here we remained for six weeks, and what a charming time it was! Boating, bathing, fishing, and sketching all the morning; guitar-playing, drawing, and writing in the evening. Our days were never long enough. Among other pleasures we made pedestrian tours round and about the lake and its environs; visiting St. Saphorin, Morziet, and many out-of-the-way villages, doing our twenty and five-and-twenty miles a day with ease, pleasure, and profit; for we drew and measured several villas, and stored our portfolios with lots of valuable things. At Lausanne we visited the tomb of John Kemble, and while sketching in the dark crypt of the Castle of Chillon heard an Englishman ask the custode if we were prisoners.

One scorching hot morning on our first arrival, we had taken one of the lumbering boats belonging to the hotel, and, in spite of the baking sun, had rowed ourselves out to the middle of the lake to enjoy a swim. I happened to be undressed first; and, eager for a header,

I plunged into the water with the intention of a long dive. But, oh! ye gods! I shall never forget it. It was a bath of ice, and I was almost paralysed with the shock. As quickly as I could manage it I was out of the refrigerator again.

"How is it?" said D'Egville. "Warm?"

"Delicious," said I. "Milk, positive milk!" while at the same time I was clambering as fast as I could up the side of the boat.

"What are you coming out for?" said he.

"I want another header," said I. "Let's see who can dive longest."

"Very well; here goes," and in he went with a joyous shout.

In an instant I saw an arm with a clenched fist at the end of it protruding from the surface of the water, and in a second more a face appeared red as a lobster.

"You blackguard!" he gasped; "I'm petrified. It's pure ice. I'll pay you off for this."

"My dear fellow," said I, "you know all our enjoyments were to be in common, and I didn't feel justified in robbing you of your share on this occasion."

I lugged him into the boat, where we were too glad to bask for the next hour, by which time, aided by a pipe or two and some smart pulling, we contrived to get all right again.

On the 10th of June we left Geneva for Milan, where

we set to work in earnest with the object of getting received as members of the Academy of Brera. We were a great deal in society, thanks to the letters of introduction we had brought with us, and passed four delightful months; for notwithstanding our hard work, and we really did work very hard, we had plenty of time for enjoyment, and most thoroughly did we avail ourselves of it. We had a great many acquaintances, artistic and otherwise; and not the least agreeable among them were four very sweet girls, whose constant company gave a charm to our lives and enhanced all our pleasures. Received into the closest intimacy by their family, we soon became inseparable, and we almost lived in their house. The mother adored us, the father esteemed us, and the brother looked upon us as marvels of talent. No excursion was complete without "our girls," no ball perfect without our beloved partners. I will not pretend to say that our long sojourn at Milan was not in a great degree caused by their enchanting society.

By a singular joke we became rather remarkable characters. During one of our walks while at Geneva, D'Egville picked up a broken silver ornament, which, without thought or intention of any kind, he fastened on the black leather belt round his waist, which, in humble imitation of Robinson Crusoe, was made the receptacle for pencils, knives, pistols, according to circumstances. All eyes were attracted by it; and, to keep up the excitement, I had a similar ornament made for my

belt, as if it were the distinguishing badge of some society.

It was a great success, and at Milan especially the effect was marvellous. We were everywhere looked upon as distinguished foreigners. Growing more audacious, we determined to keep up the joke, and for state occasions had a facsimile of the ornament made in gold, which, on a black velvet band in place of the leather belt, and over a white waistcoat, had a most remarkable effect, and made us the observed of all observers.

At last, one evening at a grand ball at the Casino dei Nobili, to which we repaired in our characters of "distinguished foreigners," our "order" produced much excitement, and obtained for us the best partners in the room. Prince Lardaria, to whom we were indebted for the invitation, and whom I had frequently met at Lord Blessington's both in London and at Naples, was bursting with curiosity, and at last could stand it no longer and opened fire. He had been a good deal in England, and prided himself upon being thoroughly acquainted with English habits and customs. After a little desultory conversation and fidgeting around, he remarked in an off-hand way, as if without any particular interest, "I see you have your——" pointing to the mysterious ornament without daring to call it anything. "I know it well. I have often seen it, of course, in London. I forget which cloob it belongs to. I think it was——?" "You must remember it," said I, "the

Megatherion." "Ah! exactly," said he, "I remember; yes, yes, the Methagerion; I remember it well," and off he bundled to impart his information through the room to the great satisfaction of everybody.

I have often wondered since that this piece of nonsense did not draw down upon us the notice of the police; the very name of a "society" being unmusical to Volscian ears. It would have served us right if we had got into a scrape about it, for our folly richly deserved punishment.

Towards the end of August three London friends made their appearance, and we agreed to take a run over to Como with them and pass a few days at Bellaggio. No one can have passed up the lake however rapidly without being struck above all other things with the Villa Arconati, better known in the neighbourhood as the Balbianello. Situated on the extreme point of a little wooded promontory facing Bellaggio, it commands the most lovely views both up and down the lake, the three open arches of its elegant loggia being strikingly visible from all points, and exciting universal admiration.

Expressing a desire to visit it, we learnt that we could do so without difficulty as it was to be let. While rambling through the villa we inquired from simple curiosity the rent, and on learning the particulars and making our calculations, we found that dividing the expenses among three (two of our friends were proceed-

ing on their tour), the whole cost, including a purveyor who undertook to provide our meals at a fixed sum per day, a cook, boatman, man-servant, boatman's wife, combining the offices of housemaid and washerwoman, use of plate, linen, boat, billiard-table, and, in short, everything one could desire, amounted to less than our cost at a second-rate hotel at Milan.

We took this little paradise for a month, started off to fetch our impedimenta, and on the 30th of August found ourselves comfortably installed in our new quarters.

Now, after a lapse of nearly fifty years, I look back upon the month spent here as one of the most charming periods of my Italian existence. Amidst all the brilliant and delicious scenes that preceded and followed it, it stands apart, peculiar and picturesque.

It was a capital opportunity for preparing our drawings for the Brera, as, with the exception of our friend, and an occasional visit from "our girls," our time passed without interruption of any kind. I was engaged on an elaborate section of the church of S. Celso and a view of Duomo D'Ossola, and D'Egville on an interior view of S. Celso and an elevation of Santa Maria delle Grazie. Thanks to our friend, Professor Albertolli, our drawings were well placed in the exhibition, and we were overwhelmed with compliments about them, with every hope held out to us that we should receive our diplomas forthwith.

In "Le Glorie dell' arti belle esposte nel Palazzo di Brera, l'anno 1827," our drawings are thus mentioned:

"Hervet d'Egville,
Matheus Carlo.

"Non defrauderemo dei dovuti elogi due Inglesi architetti il Sig. James Hervet d'Egville e Carlo Matheus, i quali si sono compiaciuti di decorare le nostre sale di preziosi disegni, reppresentanti del primo una veduta prospettica colorita all' acquarello di una parte del coro della Chiesa de Nostra Signora presso S. Celso; del secondo lo spaccato della chiesa medesima, ed una veduta scenografica parimente all' acquarello a colori della piazzi di Domodossola trattata con molto brio e spiritosa franchezza."*

After four months, pleasantly and profitably spent at Milan, on the 31st of October we took our departure for

* A letter from D'Egville's father to Mrs. Mathews contains the following translation of this notice: "We must not omit to pay a well-deserved tribute of praise to two young English architects, Messrs. Giacomo D'Egville and Carlo Mathews, who have been kind enough to decorate our rooms with two valuable designs, one of which, by Mr. D'Egville, is a prospective view of part of the choir in the Church of Notre Dame, near San Celso, painted in water colours; and the other, by Mr. Mathews, is the front of the same church, and a scenographic view, also in water colours, of the square of Domo d'Ossola; both executed with great spirit, vigour, and freedom." The letter ends with a message from D'Egville: "Mathews is very busy, as well as myself, and in high spirits as usual."

Venice. We had accomplished all we proposed—received our diplomas from the Academy, and made many valuable acquaintances of all sorts, from whom we took letters of introduction to other cities. On looking through a journal kept at the time, I find innumerable details I should like to preserve, but have so much before me that I must omit them. One entry only I copy: "Oct. 27th. Went to the opera—'Il Pirata'—first night. By a young man of the name of Bellini, who conducted, and had to bow his acknowledgments about a dozen times. Opera very interesting, and very successful. Rubini, Tamburini, and Madame Meric Lalande, all admirable."

CHAPTER IX.

CORRESPONDENCE, 1827.

CHARLES J. MATHEWS TO CHARLES MATHEWS.

"Kentish Town, January 1st, 1827.

"My dear Father,

"As my mother seems to have the entire weight not only of your affairs and her own upon her shoulders but also that of mine, I think it but right to do what I can to take from her load, and therefore determine upon writing to you at the close of the year, in order that we may have a regular understanding (that most blessed of all things) with regard to my expenditure for the next. Most people, I suppose, at the commencement of a fresh year, make all sorts of fresh determinations for the better regulation of the future, which their experience may point out to them as necessary; and I, among the rest, am most anxious to establish a system of regularity. My mother and myself have mutually felt that my expenses fall heavily upon you of late, and you, doubtless, have thought so too. It has, therefore, been my wish so to arrange and reconcile those things which may appear unnecessary to you, but of whose necessity I am well and

thoroughly convinced, that at the same time that my plans shall be complied with by you, you may feel satisfied with the terms upon which you found your compliance.

"In the first place, then, I must explain, whether or no you are aware of it, that my mother, in order that I should habituate myself to the care of my own concerns and the regulation of my own expenses, has, since January, 1825, allowed me annually a sum paid by quarterly instalments, which—after a calculation made by us from what she had paid the foregoing years, for my clothes, professional books, instruments, keep of horse in town, &c. &c.—she considered as liberally adequate to my present expenditure, amounting to the yearly sum of £200.

"I am aware how impatient you are at the slowness with which employment as an architect presents itself, but I am not only satisfied that it is by no means peculiar or unfavourable, but usual and inevitable in this profession, and equally a matter of complaint with many older and cleverer men than myself. It is notorious that all the first architects, both of former and present times, have entirely owed their first start to accident. The point, then, is the expense incurred by the chambers I have taken and my clerk's salary. I am sure you will not like to see me continue them without a speedy return arising from them, while I feel the absolute policy that requires their continuance.

It is, therefore, my wish to consider myself henceforth, that is, from this day, your debtor for the year's amount of what these chambers and said clerk incur, and I will consider myself bound to remunerate all, as fast as any sums resulting from my profession may fall in, and continue to do so until the happy time may come when I may be able to altogether relieve you from such a burthen, as I am ready to acknowledge myself, upon your means.

"The affair then, in conclusion, thus stands. In addition to the £200 of last year, I had from my mother a loan of £100 for my expenses in Wales, which the Company will return me; for though I do not, nor ever did, expect to gain anything, except practice, from them, I shall do as much as I ever calculated upon, inasmuch as that practice has been gained, and at their expense. This sum then I still request to owe you until I am settled with them.

"My mother having deducted from my £200 the £20 that you paid to Crisp for me, I have myself advanced him his entire salary—£100, which with an additional sum of £56 laid out for the residue of my expenses in Wales, is requisite, in order that I may begin the year free from all debt, and with the means of 'carrying on the war.' Of course my personal concerns have been superseded by these extra calls, and therefore require their annual settlements.

"To conclude, once more, if you will allow my

mother to supply me with this amount in the course of this month, it will set my mind at ease, who am unused to the application for money I am unable to pay, and will leave me your debtor not only in thanks but in the sum of £156, which I shall of course rub off as soon as possible. I remain, my dear father,

"Your ever affectionate Son,

"C. J. MATHEWS."

MRS. MATHEWS TO CHARLES MATHEWS.

"MY DEAREST CHARLES,

"On looking over what our dear Charlie has written, I find that in his reckoning he has delicately omitted the mention of the £80 left in your hands from his share of the authorship of the 'Invitations.' This *I*, however, think right to notice, as you would, I know, wish to consider it, when he is thus incurring a debt with you. So that if the present arrears are paid up, as he requires, he can only be said to owe you £76 up to the present moment. I am glad he has so written, as I think it shows a proper reflection upon his own situation, and no inconsiderable feeling for yours. He is a dear, good fellow, and deserves all our love, and every effort we can make for his sake. I must not forget to add that in my rough estimate last week of the sum you would require before March, Charles's claims were included (at least, two-thirds of his claim). I hope to have a letter to-day from you,

which I shall enclose in this, if Charles returns from town with it franked. God bless you.

"A. M."

CHARLES MATHEWS TO CHARLES J. MATHEWS.

"Leeds, January 4th, 1827.

"MY DEAR CHARLES,

"It is totally out of my power—hurried about as I am—to write so long an answer as I wish and as your letter deserves. I can but briefly say that it has given me the greatest satisfaction, and, so far from feeling that your demands 'have fallen heavily upon me,' I am inclined to applaud your prudence and admire your regularity. I do not conceive that you have required more of me than it is my duty to bestow upon you, and be assured, my dear boy, that I have only to look around me to congratulate myself that I possess a son who has so much consideration for his parents' feelings as you have. The disappointment is on my side, that I have not been able to do more for you than I have in a pecuniary point of view. We have been extravagant this last year, and, some of my money being so locked up that I cannot touch it, has occasioned a temporary want of supply, and, in the moment of annoyance, I may have made some observations to your mother that you allude to; but I know of nothing but the clerk that I, on reflection, should have commented upon. I did think that he was another child who might have been dispensed with. As to my impatience at the slow-

ness of your advancement, I should be ashamed to confess it in a moment of calm deliberation. I shall not listen to anything like an arrangement of your being my debtor for the year's amount of the chambers. Whatever you require within reason that your mother sanctions and my income can afford, I request you will look to me to provide, and do not let your mind be hampered by any such restriction and drawback to your comforts as the accumulation of a debt to your own father would naturally bring upon you. I am too much gratified by your clear statement and anxiety to be economical to entertain the slightest doubt of your prudence. The whole is so candid and clear that you have bestowed much more pleasure on me than you could possibly have anticipated. The hundred pounds—eighty of which I believe (or more) I *owe you*—you shall have; but pray wait until my return home, if not very inconvenient. This will be about the 15th, and then and shortly after I hope to be able to set your mind completely at ease as to money matters.

"Give my love to your dear mother, and say that I cannot properly write to her to-day. I get up very late, and when I have to travel and act the same day, pay bills, and suffer the cruel persecution of callers at an inn, it is nearly impossible to write. I did not like to keep you in suspense from Saturday till Monday morning, or would willingly have postponed this reply. The most savage horrors of winter surround me. I presume it is

the same with you. A difference of above forty degrees in twenty-four hours. We are here seven degrees below zero, and snow falling in flakes. I am well notwithstanding, though pinched up, though lame and itchy. ALL the places are taken again for to-night. I have received both your letters, and two papers. Paper by return directed at Mr. J. P. Smith's, Leeds. Monday, Halifax; but I shall write on Saturday, from Wakefield. Was your letter copied in a machine, or what was its peculiarity?*

"As to your mother's hand, I literally did not know it at first. What did this mean?—'I hope to have a letter from you to-day, which I shall enclose in this, if Charles returns from town with it franked. A. M.' Very mysterious and totally inexplicable. I hope she did not mean to return my expected letter unopened. God bless you, my dear Charles, and be assured of the sincerity with which I say

"I am your affectionate Father,

"C. MATHEWS."

CHARLES J. MATHEWS TO MRS. MATHEWS.

"Milan, July 15, 1827.

"MY DEAREST MOTHER,

"As I broke off rather abruptly in my last letter, I think it but right to send you a few lines now that I have some little leisure—in comparison I mean—to

* The manuscript letter looks more like a lithograph than anything else.

devote to it. I am rather disappointed at not getting a letter from you to-day as I expected, but I know the chances are ten to one always against their just arrival, so I will patiently wait till to-morrow. I went, last night, to a grand party, at the 'Casino dei Negociante,' a very stylish affair here and greatly frequented. All the merchants of the city have clubbed together and built a very handsome palace, or casino, containing splendid ball-rooms, billiard-rooms, cards, coffee, newspapers, &c. &c. &c. There they assemble with their wives and daughters, all in the greatest possible toilette, to dance, hear music (vocal and instrumental), and talk over the scandal of the town. It was a very brilliant evening indeed. The first singers in Milan were there, in a sort of orchestra in the centre of the gardens, which are somewhat English, and illuminated throughout, full of fountains, grottoes, caves, rivulets, and all the delights which can be imagined, where the climate allows ladies in white satin shoes to walk on the grass at midnight. The dancing I confess I considered as rather out of place, when the heat was so excessive that the gentlemen could hardly bear their coats and neckcloths on, and the ladies would willingly have relinquished their stays. Nothing but waltzes all the night, till I was really giddy and head-achey to death; but as the dancers were more like angels than women—an old comparison, but a true one—my eyes were riveted upon them without the possibility of withdrawing

them. But, in the midst of all these elegancies and pleasures, just listen to the romance of what follows. After dancing with a very pretty girl, we, both heated and tired, went into the refreshment room for some lemonade or something to cool our raging thirsts and agonized stomachs. After having devoured some juicy Italian fruits—in a most romantic saloon, opening into the illuminated garden, calling to mind the palaces of the East—we were about to wing our way again, when one of the fallen angels of this paradise called me somewhat peremptorily back. I asked what I had done and what he wanted, upon which he laconically explained himself by the expressive words, 'Twelve sous, signor;' and I positively discovered that it was necessary, in this elegant society of Italian ladies and gentlemen, to which we had been invited with so much good-will, to fork out twelve sous for the nectar which we had unconsciously poured down our parched throats. Does not this speak highly of the delicacy of sentiment among the Italians? In a gentleman's private house to be obliged to pay for what you eat and drink!

"This morning, being somewhat tormented by gnats and fleas beyond our wont, we were up and dressed at half-past three; and, considering what we had best do to amuse ourselves so early, we determined to set off to Monza, the palace of the sovereign, ten miles from Milan. No sooner said than done; and so at six o'clock we were breakfasting there. It is one of the finest

things we have seen, and well kept altogether. The gardens and parks are in the English style, and very extensive; but in all foreign palaces and houses the furniture is so miserably poor and thin that it takes away very materially from the general effect. In England—I'll say even in Ivy Cottage—there is not a room but what is perfect as far as it goes. Lots of chairs, tables, and cabinets, curtains and looking-glasses, at any rate; but here, even in this splendid palace, one table and six small chairs are the utmost, I think, in the most splendid apartments. What amuses me always is to see the sleeping rooms and dressing rooms of the occupants. Little meagre white beds, wooden common-looking chairs, covered with a mean white dimity cushion, and wash-hand basins which, when brimful of water, would not cover the back of your hand. And then the anterooms full of dusters, and brooms, and all sorts of dirty things unfit for a palace or anywhere else. The gardens, however, made up very much for these inconsistencies, as indeed did the magnificence of the state rooms of the château, and particularly the beauty of the decorations on the ceiling and walls. The Emperor, of course, seldom lives in it—the case with most of these palaces. . . .

"Give my best love to my dear father, and believe me, my dearest mother,

"Your most affectionate Son,

"C. J. MATHEWS."

CHARLES J. MATHEWS TO MRS. MATHEWS.

"Sept. 1st, 1827, Como, Villa Balbianello.

"MY DEAREST MOTHER,

"What a time has elapsed since I have written to you, and what a still greater time is it since I have been blessed with the sight of your dear hand; for in consequence of such important changes in our movements as I am about to relate, I have not yet received any of the letters sent to Verona and from thence to Pavia. . . . The first piece of news then is that Brera —or in other words—the exhibition is open, and D'Egville's drawing very well placed and much admired, as indeed it ought to be, for independent of the pains it has cost, it is a most beautiful drawing. I have chosen to refuse permission that mine should be placed there with it, but when I explain the reason you will see I have acted wisely. His drawing is a *view* and coloured as vigorously as any oil painting; while my drawings are all strictly architectural, such as plans, elevations, and sections, which in the first place are never observed, and in the second would be completely killed by the vicinity of oil pictures. Thus I have contented myself with the honour of being solicited by the professors to exhibit and reserve my drawings for the grand day, when our fate is to be decided. So much for that subject. The next piece of news is that Elder has made his appearance here, and given me most delightful

accounts of home. He arrived just at the critical moment of getting the drawings finished, and consequently was obliged to wait a few days before we could *associate* with such a butterfly as himself; but the job once over, behold we all start together for the Lake of Como. Of all the scenery I have ever seen, this charms beyond all. Well, we made our tour on the lake, and found the most splendid collection of villas that can be imagined. You know our object to be especially the observation of the villas in Italy, and so we instantly made up our minds to make a stay of two or three weeks at the least, and made an inquiry about the best inns—and well and so and so—one fine morning we—the two architects and the T. G., be it known that all *travelling gentlemen* are nicknamed so—started to see the Villa Arionata. Nothing can equal our astonishment and delight at the splendid situation of this villa. Situated in the finest part of the lake, commanding the most lovely views, the palace itself most beautiful, and everything combining to make it the most charming of all we had seen. Well, what did we do? 'Of course, two poor artists as you are, you went away with sorrow from so enchanting a place.' Not a bit of it—so far from it, quite the reverse. 'Two poor artists as we are—we took it for a month!!!' Do you open your eyes? Do you think us mad? Mad or no, here we are. Elder immediately gave up his tour, wrote off to Florence for his letters, and established

himself for the month with us; we started for Milan to get all the rest of our things in order to equip us as 'Barons of Arionati de Balbianello.' But I must mention the manner in which we arranged the business so quickly. Finding from the people who kept the palace in order and showed it to visitors that it was to be let, D'Egville immediately fixed upon it as the place of all others in point of situation for his father, and we therefore crossed the lake again to the Palazzo Trotti to inquire, more out of curiosity than anything else, upon what terms the villa in question was to be let. The Marquess Trotti instantly informed us that he required one hundred and fifty lire a month, upon which we as instantly took it, not for the fathers but for the sons. I had intended frightening you by leaving you ignorant of the value of the above sum of money, but I think it is better to put you out of your anxiety at once. One hundred and fifty lire then is exactly . . . £5 4s. English money, for the month. What do you think of that? Most happy am I that we have Elder with us, to attest the truth as well as to pay his share of the expenses, otherwise no one could believe the thing possible. I tell you that we have the most beautiful situation on the lake, an amazing quantity of mountain, all our own, almost an island, the house furnished, every kind of linen found, kitchen utensils, beds, &c., fourteen rooms besides a billiard-room, and hundreds of dressing-rooms and closets; a boat and boatman, a cook, a valet, and a gardener, and the

expenses of all this divided among three persons makes a difference of two hundred francs French, or £8 English in the month, in our expenditure. And on which side lies the difference? Let me once for all assure you of the plain truth, that by taking this charming villa with all its delightful appendages, we spend £8 *less* than we pay at this moment at our *secondary* inn at Milan. There's a romance for you!!! Oh, that I could transport you and my father here for the month, for transported you would be, to enjoy this scene of enchantment! However, as the season is too advanced, it is quite out of the question to speak of it, but really I think next summer there could be nothing more delightful or easy for you to do, than to take it for a month or two in the best part of the season. . . .

"Again must I break off, but this time *depend* upon *two* letters LONG by the next post. Love to all.

"Your ever affectionate Son,

"C. J. MATHEWS."

CHARLES J. MATHEWS TO MRS. MATHEWS.

"Venice, Nov. 19th, 1827.

"MY DEAREST MOTHER,

"The date of this letter will explain the cause in a great degree of the length of time that has elapsed since my last. For many various reasons we judged it best to come right on to Venice at once and make

that place our headquarters, in consequence of its vicinity to Padua, Vicenza, and Verona, through which places we passed quickly, merely giving ourselves time to satisfy our curiosity a little at each. At Verona with great joy I found four letters from you, and among them the two so long missing. I cannot tell you the delight with which I learnt the news of my father's freedom, and with even more did I hear of his engagements just concluded with Mr. Price, to whom I shall write speedily. Indeed I should have done so long ago according to my promise made to him before starting, in order to give him any hints respecting pieces or performances I might fall in with in Italy; but really from the time of starting up to the present moment I have not seen anything worth noting respecting either one or the other; for, operas and singers excepted, there is positively nothing whatever. The theatre of marionettes at Milan that Mr. Arnold so particularly advised me to visit, and from which he took his idea of Guy Faux, is quite a child's sort of amusement and exceedingly stupid. The mechanism is certainly well done; but as all their pieces are the same as those of the regular theatres, it is certainly far preferable to see them acted by men and women. The grand opera at Milan is most charming, and indeed the second in Italy, yielding only to Naples. The night before we came away a new opera was produced called the 'Pirate' (nothing to do with Sir

Walter's), written by a young man of the name of Bellini, a Sicilian, only five-and-twenty, but of most astonishing genius. This was his first opera, and met with most brilliant success. It was a most interesting thing to be present at, as the composer is obliged to preside in the orchestra the three first nights, and have the satisfaction or horror of hearing his opera cheered or damned. On this occasion it must have been most gratifying, as the poor pale trembling composer was had out and cheered ten or twelve times during the evening. By-the-bye, there is a most curious notice stuck up in all the principal theatres here saying: 'That any person hissing, hooting, or making any disturbance will be instantly put into the hands of the police.' 'Here's a land of liberty, where a man mustn't larrup his own nigger.' Well, it so happened that an Irishman only a week ago in Milan, his name I could not learn, chose, certainly with very bad taste, to hiss after a favourite duet when everyone else was applauding violently. In an instant the whole pit turned upon him, and upon his continuing it out of bravado, the police quietly walked into him, and in one hour from that time he was sent out of Milan. Can you believe such a thing as that? I can swear to the truth of it, and show the newspaper that contains the account of it.

"The journey from Milan here was exceedingly agreeable, though tremendously tedious. We came by a vetturino with two horses, who undertakes to bring

you and all your luggage, find and pay all your expenses on the road, for a certain sum, which is only to be paid on condition that he arrives to the time he promises, and you are content with him throughout the journey, which we certainly were. He gave us lots of time to see everything we wished on the road, and took us to the first inns, where we eat, drank, and slept like lords. We were highly delighted with Brescia, Verona, and Vicenza. Not so with Padua; but the approach to Venice, as I believe all agree, is the most beautiful sight that can be imagined. We had the luck of getting in just as the sun was setting upon the Lagoon, which has been so many thousand times described by every traveller, whether he arrived at that time or no, that I shall leave all reflections upon its beauty to your ardent imagination. To be disappointed with Venice is quite impossible, and what your learned friends may mean by being surprised at our choosing it for our winter quarters is quite inexplicable to me, since it is not only notorious for being the best wintering place in Italy, but also for being quite unendurable in the summer, besides possessing more to interest us than any city (Rome and Florence excepted) throughout Italy. . . .

"We were obliged to come away after all from Milan without anything being done about our diploma; but a letter from Albertolli, received two or three days back, contains the following cheering assurance: 'With regard to proposing D'Egville and yourself as members of the Academy, do not doubt but that at the very first sitting

you shall be proposed and most certainly instantly received, as the Academicians esteem greatly the works which you have exhibited in the Academy itself.' I long for the certainty, and in the meantime we shall set to work to obtain the same honours here. . . . It is enough at present to say, that we are both in excellent health and spirits, finding everything that we can desire, and meeting everywhere, both from artists and others, with most excessive marks of friendship and regard, and now only want a letter from you and the arrival of our case to complete our happiness. With my fondest love to my dear father,

"Your ever most affectionate Son,

"C. J. MATHEWS."

CHAPTER X.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY—SECOND VISIT TO ITALY (*continued*), 1827-1828.

I WILL not say we stayed at Venice, we took root. For nearly a twelvemonth (including a visit to Istria and occasional trips to Friuli, Trieste, Padua, &c.) we took up our quarters there, not leaving for Florence till the following September. To give any adequate account of this delightful year would be impossible, unless a whole volume were devoted to it. We had charming apartments on the Grand Canal, our gondola, our box at the opera, a constant succession of balls, concerts, ridottos, and receptions, the run of the best society, Venetian and Austrian, noble and artistic, and, in short, everything that could render life agreeable.

Venice was very gay at that time and the pleasant houses open for visitors nightly were very numerous. The three principal resorts were those of the three celebrated Countesses Michieli, Albrizzi, and Benzon, the three Graces who, in their youth, are reported to have danced round the tree of liberty in the Piazza in the scantiest of attire. The Countess Michieli, the eldest of

the trio, was very deaf, but very clever and amusing; at home on every subject; speaking French and English with perfect ease and freedom. She was literary, and had published several esteemed works, especially the "Pompe e festi Veneziani," which had a very great success in its day, and has remained a valuable piece of Venetian history to this hour. Her house was generally thrown open about nine o'clock, and a very pleasant party was always to be found there—giochetti, charades, forfeits, conversation, and an occasional dance.

The Countess Albrizzi's reception began a little later, and was rather more stiff and particular—swells, literati, artists, nobles, courtly dames and courtly manners. She also dabbled in literature. Canova's works, published by Cicognara, contained descriptions by the Countess Albrizzi, and other light works manifest a graceful taste.

She was the youngest of the three Graces, and still aspired to admiration, and was as careful in the preservation of her few remaining charms as if her future fortune were dependent upon her beauty. She was certainly wonderfully well preserved.

At any hour of the night, and till any hour of the morning, succeeded *the* most delightful reception of any in Venice, that of the splendid old Countess Benzon. Here all ranks repaired after the opera, after the balls, after everything; sure to find a brilliant assemblage, with the heartiest, gayest, most insouciante of hostesses, and here

Lord Byron was a constant visitor. At the end of a long and elegant saloon sat the Countess in state on her sofa; the ladies, seated in formidable array, forming a long avenue in front of her, through which two dazzling lines of female beauty, and braving the artillery of their merry sparkling eyes, every fresh comer had to pass in order to pay his respects and kiss the hand of the presiding deity; after which ceremony, and a little lively chat with the Countess, a retreat could be effected and attention devoted to the bevy of beauties assembled.

The Benzon must have been a splendid woman in her time; tall and elegant in figure, with resplendent complexion, sweet blue eyes, and an abundance of fair hair, which she was still proud of displaying, with the boast that it was "all her own." She certainly retained a wonderful amount of fascination, coquettish as a girl of nineteen, revelling in flattery, and receiving any amount of recognition of her charms—the more exaggerated the more welcome—with a tap of her fan, a gratified simper, and cry of "Matto" and "Baron." Her cavaliere, Rangoni, a dear old beau of some sixty years, attended upon her with all the devotion of a youthful cicisbeo, and was languished upon and toyed with by his divinity as though they were in the first heyday of their youth.

Monotonous as it may be thought such meetings would become, repeated as they were night after night and year after year, they never seemed so. The party

was never entirely the same, and no evening was complete without winding up at the Benzon's.

Other houses had their one night in the week only. Such were those of the Countesses Vemir, Mocinigo, and other names associated with and descended from the old Doges, their illustrious ancestors.

The custom of receiving of an evening at understood hours is, I think, very agreeable. Your mornings are your own, and you are never afraid of your visits being inopportune; you know you are always welcome, and the more the merrier. Indeed to get sight of some of these ladies in the morning was a rarity. I don't think I saw the Benzon half a dozen times by daylight the whole time I was in Venice.

The best balls were certainly those of the Baron de Thurn, the Austrian minister, to whom we had brought letters of introduction, and through whom we were received in the best Austrian society, at the Governor's, at the Countess Wetzlar's and their set. Not an evening passed without three or four brilliant balls, or concerts, or reunions of some sort, in addition to the usual receptions; so it will be readily imagined that our time passed pleasantly enough.

The Caffé Florian in the Piazza was also a great resource, especially in hot weather. If about three or four in the morning sleep proved impossible, at Florian's company was always to be found—a dozen chatty fellows, sipping sabayons, drinking iced coffee, and smoking

cigars in the moonlight; the caffé never closing till the garish light of day appeared. When people went to bed—if they went to bed at all—it is difficult to say. They disappeared, certainly, for a short time in the morning, but were never found missing in the afternoon.

Notwithstanding all these diversions we contrived to do a deal of work—drew and measured palaces and churches—made elaborate drawings of St. Mark's, the Rialto, and the many picturesque subjects of the exhaustless city, and prepared for our admission as members of the Belle Arti, where we hoped to obtain our diplomas, as at Milan.

On the 11th of June, after various delays from various causes, we at length bid a most reluctant adieu to Venice and its inhabitants, and after all the various promises of writing, &c. &c., embarked in the steamboat for Trieste on our way to Pola. The following letters will best describe our subsequent adventures.

"Capo D'Istria, June 8th, 1828.

"MY DEAREST MOTHER,

"With a desperate struggle we, at last, suddenly broke from the cable which tied us so long to Venice, that inexhaustible mine of precious gems, and here we are in Istria. I have much wondered none of our many sapient friends have not long since expressed to you and my dear father their astonishment and regret at our long sojourn in the City of Palaces. I am equally

pleased at finding my expectations unfounded, as it saves me the trouble of a long explanation and defence of our proceedings, and the more assures me of your confidence in our judgment of what is proper for us. I am aware that few architects have devoted much of their time to that place, generally taking a hurried view of it at the tail of their travels; but I have never heard any of them who did not regret their obligation to leave it so soon. If we have spent more time upon it than we are perhaps justified in, considering the short period we have left for other places, at least we have been employed upon almost untrodden ground, and have reaped, I hope, the consequent advantages. If we have been so long detained in that city, where another year entire might be well bestowed, and to which I hope some day to make another journey, I know not how we shall tear ourselves from Florence and Rome, Naples and Genoa, where we have a right to expect three times as much to occupy us. However, trusting that the future may fall out according to our expectations, we can thus far rest perfectly contented with the past, which is always one principal point gained.

"After all the parting adieus to our friends at Venice, a few of whom we parted from with much sorrow (and I must add, considering that we know nearly everyone in the place, that is, everyone worth knowing, there were but a few whose acquaintance we should care much about renewing), we put ourselves

and our baggage on board the steamboat for Trieste, accompanied by a friend of ours—a Mr. Taaffe, brother to Lord Taaffe, who is Minister at Vienna, who determined to join our pedestrian excursion to Pola, and after a beautiful night passage of ninety miles on the 'salt sea ocean,' arrived with the sun next morning in the Bay of Trieste. Not wishing to lose a moment at that place we instantly made inquiries as to the mode of sending our luggage to Pola, intending to convey ourselves there by foot; but as no one could give us any information about those savage parts, few having heard of them and no one having been there, we took their only advice, viz.: to start in a small boat for Capo D'Istria, from whence the chance of baggage-mules or some sort of car seemed to be practicable, and accordingly, with a fair wind, we this evening arrived at this miserable little hole, consisting of four or five grass-grown streets and a couple of caffés, under the shelter of the Town-hall and church, in the middle of a wide desolate-looking Piazza. Up to this moment our inquiries are anything but satisfactory as to our further progress, the distance to Pola varying with each person from fifty to ninety, and from twenty-two to a hundred and ten miles. You would suppose we were attempting to penetrate into the interior of Africa, to judge from the amazement expressed by all at our wish to prosecute such a journey, and on foot, too. We are just also in the charming doubt of whether we shall

be able to have our passports—those curses, the most tormenting that could have been hit upon to punish erring man—before ten or eleven o'clock to-morrow, which is as much as to say, spend another day here; for to start in the heat of the day, we being neither Shadrach, Meshach, nor Abednego, would be much the same as taking a day's journey through a mammoth fryingpan. In short, we shall be obliged to act like prudent people and sleep upon it, trusting that in the meantime things may be brought to a crisis. Taaffe, who is not quite used to roughing it, begins to flag a little in his enthusiasm; and all those determinations which people will make when comfortably at home, of bread and cheese, a glass of water, and a bivouac in the open fields, have gradually vanished from his recollection as the reality gently made its appearance. The fleas have already begun to show signs of activity, and the gnats are in great profusion. I, however, do not suffer so much from them as D'Egville, who is covered from top to toe with their bites.

"I am very sleepy and tired with my journey and all night work and shall be glad to throw myself upon my 'humble pallet,' and so I wish you a very good night, and hope the morrow will bring us a safe deliverance out of this melancholy place. With my unceasing love to yourself and my dear father,

"Your affectionate Son,

"C. J. MATHEWS."

"Pola, June 18th, 1828.

"My dearest Mother,

"It is useless that I make good resolutions, it does not rest with me to keep them. I am at the mercy of a set of barbarians now that I would never have calculated upon. Obliged to bring my letter on with me from Capo D'Istria, there being no post-office at that place, I find myself nearly in the same predicament here, for, though there is an office, it is almost a sinecure, since there are no people belonging to the town but peasants and farmers, the greater part of whom don't even know how to write, and, consequently, there is but very little occasion for a post-office. I begin to be exceedingly uneasy about the means of sending my letters, as God knows when the post may be able to start, depending entirely upon a market-boat which comes and goes at irregular periods from and to Trieste. However, my hopes and disappointments are daily, and I, therefore, will not despair. I must in the meantime acquaint you that after a long pro and con with all sorts of people at Capo D'Istria, the possibility of getting any conveyance for our luggage turned out to be beyond our power, and consequently our foot journey was, with the very greatest reluctance, abandoned. Nothing was left us but to make the best of our way in the same small boat that had conveyed us from Trieste, and hardly large enough it was to contain us and our baggage.

However, the weather being very fine and the wind favourable, we embarked ourselves and a few cold provisions on board, and away we went. It is needless to recount the dull work we had of it for seven-and-twenty hours, with every now and then a calm, a broiling sun, hotter than anything I ever felt anywhere, which speedily deprived our noses of their skin, and made our cheeks like pomegranates. 'Young we were and sore,' without being afraid. Our only torment began to be hunger and thirst, and some serious thoughts were entertained of the obligation to eat one of the sailors, who would have been anything but a delicious morsel; but it was luckily rendered needless by our sudden arrival in what we supposed to be the port of Pola, pitch dark and a calm. After about an hour and a half's rowing round the said port, we had the consolation of hearing one of the sailors appeal most pathetically to Saint Anthony of Padua to know what he had done with the town of Pola, which the said sailor swore he had left in the port only a week ago, but which, after a tedious row quite round the bay, had evidently taken its departure. The deductions from this experiment were evident and twofold, that either the town had been mysteriously spirited away, or that the sailor had mistaken some other bay for the one he believed it. This last turned out to be the case, and not till after nearly two hours' more rowing did we pop upon the right one, which we should

as certainly have passed in the dark, had not the friendly bray of an ass directed our attention that way, and suggested that there were more of them than the one we heard; and it turned out exactly as we imagined, for upon a nearer approach we found the long-desired town, as nicely hid as it is possible to be, and evading detection even in the daytime. It wanted still two or three hours till daylight, and those hours we were obliged to spend on board our boat, to our no small annoyance, till the gentlemen at the Sanità, or Health Office, felt inclined to get out of bed and examine our passports. All the ceremonies at length being completed, we were conducted to the inn or hovel kept by a Greek of the name of Cronopoli, with a pair of mustachoes enough for any two, when an attempt at refreshment was made but by no means succeeded in, not being provided for three such illustrious and hungry guests. So, after an attempt to drink some rank wine and eat some tunny-fish preserved in oil and vinegar, and flavoured with sweet currants, we tumbled into our beds to sleep as well as an army of gnats, flies, fleas, bugs, and earwigs would let us. I shall close this in the hope of being able to send it either this evening or to-morrow, being assured of a boat.

"Ever yours,

"C. J. M."

Through a mistake in our arrangements our remit-

tances had been directed from Venice to Trieste, and the post being too uncertain to trust to, dependent as it was entirely upon the arrival of chance boats, D'Egville determined to start at once for one, perhaps both, of those places, to recover the requisite money and send it on to me at Pola, to release me from my confinement, I being left as a material guarantee for the amount of our bill.

"Pola, July 11, 1828.

"My dearest Mother,

"Here I am still, under the most charming, the most delightful of all circumstances that can be imagined. Alone, and without one farthing to bless myself with, in pawn as it were, without the power, for I know not how long, of being redeemed. After waiting beyond the time we had at first intended for the remittance daily expected from D'Egville's father, my quarter's money being naturally enough exhausted, having had to serve for two instead of one for nearly three months, we found that there was nothing left for us but one of two things, either to live in banishment at Pola till my next quarter's arrival, or for D'Egville to start for Venice and draw upon Shielin for the requisite money, and send it to me at Pola to release me from my confinement. This last plan we of course adopted, and you may imagine how melancholy I might be at seeing him start to leave me for a fortnight at the least in this uninhabited savage

place. The matter will thus be easily arranged, but the consequences I, with some of your foresight, can plainly see to be these. That about the 1st of August, when his second quarter ought to arrive instead of his first, he will have to pay it all to Shielin in repayment of what he has drawn now from him, and again shall we be dependent upon my quarter. If Mr. D'Egville would take example by you, my dearest mother, these things could not happen, and the most provoking part is that he sets down this sort of accidents to our imprudence, when in fact the thing is as plain as can be that if the money arrives at the *end* instead of at the *beginning* of each quarter, instead of having it in advance to go when and how it best suits us, it vanishes instantly to pay off the debts that have accumulated, and we are as badly off as before. However, it is not fair to harass you about other people's affairs, so I'll say no more about it. I have finished two drawings here, one of the Arch and one of the Amphitheatre, two most beautiful subjects, and I hope they will answer my purpose at the Academy. To wring forth praise from D'Egville I assure you is no such easy matter, and for the first time since we started he declared that the outline of my Amphitheatre was beautiful. I was 'pretty considerable proud' of this I can tell you, for 'approbation from Sir Hubert Stanley is praise indeed,' and I only hope the professors at Venice may be of the same opinion. We have been perfectly enchanted with Pola, both in point of situation

and of antiquities. The Amphitheatre is by far the most beautiful I have seen, so lovely in situation, amidst trees and mountains, and reflected in the Bay of Pola, which is one of the most perfect in the world. The temples and triumphal arch are also in good preservation, and remarkably elegant in their proportions. The costume of the peasantry is very picturesque, and approaches the Grecian. They speak the Sclavonian language, and are a very fine race of people. In short, after all I am better off here at Pola under the circumstances than I should have been at any other place of its size, as I have plenty of objects to amuse me and plenty for study; it is only the idea that I cannot move if I would that excites a disagreeable feeling, and in addition the anxiety I have about the non-receipt of your letters. I will not say how long it is since I have seen your handwriting. My only consolation is that the cause of my daily and weekly disappointment is evidently anything but your silence, for, though I left word at Venice that all letters were to be forwarded to me here, the thing is more easily said than done. How D'Egville is to send me the money I know not, besides the passport, which being made out in both our names, he could not go without, nor can I stir till he sends it back. Love to my dear father.

"Ever your affectionate Son,

"C. J. M."

"Peroi, July 18, 1828.

"My dearest Mother,

"Here I am still in pawn, but by a turn of fate enjoying myself mightily. Two days after my last letter I went on a little trip on horseback with the lawyer of Pola, a young German, to visit the neighbouring villages, and I had a most delightful day. From Pola we went to the Isle of Olives, not very far distant, where we found the Sclavonian peasants celebrating a festival, and after taking our share in the dancing and merriment for a couple of hours, we continued our journey to Dignano, a little village only celebrated from the remarkable dress of the peasants. I was very much pleased indeed with them. The women, amongst whom were some very pretty girls, were dressed exactly in the style of the old Venetian ladies, as we see them in old prints, and had a most surprising effect as they stood in groups about the town. My dear 'slight acquaintance' finding me so much delighted with these dresses, proposed extending our ride to Peroi, another small village at five miles' distance, and one of the wonders of Istria, being a small colony of Greeks, consisting of about sixty families, all peasants, preserving its ancient religion, costume, and manners, and speaking its original language, in the midst of Italians, Istrians, and Sclavonians. I jumped at the proposal, and was amply repaid for my trouble. I never met with anything so elegant and so picturesque as these people, the girls very handsome,

particularly tall and well made, and the men equally so. The faces are strictly Greek, and the dress charming. I had scarcely entered the place before I determined upon removing there next day, it being only seven miles from Pola, and accordingly picking out the prettiest house, and that which contained the prettiest girls, I told them my intentions, and gave them to expect me the next day. It so happened that this family was related to my landlord Cronopoli, at Pola, also a Greek, which gave me greater facility in obtaining this favour (for it is considered a great favour, and one never granted to strangers) to take up my abode amongst them. The day before yesterday I arrived with my drawing materials, clothes, &c., and here I am established. On my arrival I explained that I came to be one of the family and not to be treated as a *gentleman*, and accordingly I proceeded with them into the fields to help the cutting of barley, and to their great delight dressed myself in their costume, which I did also to my own great delight; in short, I found myself once more as among the Neapolitan peasantry, happy amidst the innocent simplicity and real enjoyments of unsophisticated nature. The perfect pleasure I felt while dancing, singing, and playing with these beautiful Greek girls I cannot tell you, enhanced by the feeling that I had already usurped a small nook in their hearts by having thus accommodated myself to their manners. It was quite charming to see them

gradually throwing off the reserve of the first day, and beginning to regard me really as one of the family. The pride they had in dressing me and taking me about with them was great. I had good cause to wear out my legs in dancing with them on the rough stones of the village, for one after another engaged with me till I had gone through the whole string. I then made a sketch of one of them who had been married about a month, in her bridal dress, a copy of which I gave her. At three o'clock I am up and out with them in the fields, partaking of their food as well as their pursuits, the acme of which consists in a couple of hard eggs and a bit of brown bread; not being quite able to accommodate my stomach to the more ordinary fare of bread cooked in oil and vinegar, and dreadfully fat bacon. Fancy me at this moment writing to you, dressed in a white sort of body and petticoat, richly worked in red, blue, and yellow silk, an embroidered handkerchief on my head, and red stockings bound with red sashes up to the knee, and sheepskin sandals. I wish Lewis were here to make you a sketch of me, but in his room I am trying a hand at it myself. It is growing dark, and I must send this to Pola to-night, so good-bye for the present. I fear my last letter cannot have had the luck of getting off yet, but shall know to-night. Good-bye, my dearest mother.

"Your ever affectionate

"C. J. M."

The next letter has already been published by my mother in her memoirs of my father, but it is absolutely necessary to give it here according to its date, and as an essential portion of my narrative.

"Peroi, July 25th, 1828.

"I have this moment received a letter from D'Egville, enclosed in one from the banker at Trieste, and sent off by a courier on purpose, which enables me to quit my agreeable confinement—for my banishment has proved anything but detestable. Seeing no chance of getting my letters off (both of which I find are still at Pola) before I get to Trieste, I think it best to continue writing till I am able to close my paper in the certainty of despatching it. A few days more and I shall be again in civilised parts, having engaged a vessel for the day after to-morrow to convey me to Trieste. In the meantime I must continue my description of Peroi. You have no idea of the little paradise that it is. I begin quite to love the people and to fancy myself one of them. I am called by them all 'Sukey;' isn't that a sweet name? So spelt and pronounced in England it is anything but enchanting, but here the word is Greek, and means 'my soul' (*vide* Lord Byron), and is a term of the greatest affection. What would I not give that you could possess, through the means of some beneficent fairy, the glass that I have read of in some child's book, in which the possessor could behold at every moment of

the day the absent person, and contemplate his occupations and situations. The first thing in the morning you would look in the glass (as you no doubt do as it is), and instead of beholding yourself in a laced night-cap with sky-blue bandeau, you would see me (but you must get up at three o'clock to do so) sitting on a stone bench, surrounded by half-a-dozen pretty, innocent girls; the one adjusting my head and tying on my worsted handkerchief, another lacing my sandals, and all occupied in the decoration of their new-found toy. Near me you would see others, with their beautiful black hair hanging down to their waists, and undergoing the operation of plaiting, till it takes the most beautiful classic form that can be desired. Here and there, at intervals, are three or four fine tall lads, with ample moustachios, trotting to the fields on horseback, with large trusses of straw before them, and saddle-bags hanging on each side, displaying in their capacious gaping mouths (not the lads, but the saddle-bags) the store of brown bread and wine kegs for their banquet; and a young foal ambling after her aged mother, and now and then seizing her by her swishy tail, and kicking from pure fun and frolic. Then will pass by a little brown bare-legged boy, with a flock of sheep, with here and there a reverend old ram, decorated with bells and red ribbons—a most picturesque group, making dust enough to smother the whole village.

"You will gaze for a moment in admiration of the

beauty of the lad; his fine Greek face and large intelligent eyes, dressed only in a sheepskin thrown most gracefully over him, and confined with a crimson sash; a pair of sandals and a slouched hat defending his two extremities, and a double pipe of rude form resounding through the woods as he saunters after his family. A short time after you will see the whole village in motion —girls, boys, old men and old women, and myself in the midst of the throng, moving forward in procession, some with pitchers on their heads, to begin the labour of the day. You will hear, if your ears are good enough, the choruses of villagers, very different from the compositions of Bishop, arranged most harmoniously by themselves, and sung most correctly in parts. The melody you will hear some day imitated by me, as copied exactly from themselves. During the interval of these choruses you will probably—but you must listen well—hear a solo, though of a somewhat more sprightly character, and in a more comprehensible language, in a voice not unfamiliar to you, and at the same time you will observe the pleasure without humbug, and the approbation without flattery, expressed upon the smiling countenances of the rest of the party. An hour or two afterwards you, perhaps, will take up the glass again—fancy it's a looking-glass, and so you can resume the scrutiny many times through the day without much effort—and you will see the party dispersed in various groups over the landscape, and under the shade of some old tree you will see me

lying with a book in my hand—most probably a Byron or a Moore—in the character of an Arcadian, casting occasional affectionate looks towards my darling peasants at their work, and now and then joined by a girl or two from amongst them, who will sit by my side and pretend to read my book with me till called by the rest to their work again, and sometimes you will see them depart—don't be scandalised—with their cheeks slightly coloured lest their companions should have observed the chaste salute as freely received as given. Then about the time my father's trumpet announces his approach to the breakfast-room — while waiting for the arrival of his smoking steak—take a glance at me sitting as one of my smiling circle, with a hard egg in each hand, a small loaf of whiter bread than the rest, baked on purpose for me and regarded as a *chef-d'œuvre* in its kind, on my knees, and a wooden bowl as white as snow before me full of wine and water, to afford a tolerable easy passage to my frugal fare; while my companions, with appetites scarcely credible, dispose of bucketful after bucketful of bread made into soup by the addition of oil and vinegar, till you begin to doubt whether the feat is performed by elephants or peasants. What would Sir John Carr say to see these girls eat? He, who thinks the merry-thought of a pigeon too much for a woman, would stare to see a bucket of vinegar, bread, and oil disappear between the rosy lips that he had just been kissing, and see the languishing eyes of a lovely girl throwing aside

their jetty fringes to seek the bottom of a three-quart pitcher, which, 'high poised in air,' travels from mouth to mouth, emptied again and again into the elephantine receptacles of these tender maidens, and, like the tower of Pisa, threatening destruction to all around it in its fall. The natural consequence of this light repast, added to the heat of an Istrian sun, is a general inclination to sleep; the girls most modestly seeking some shady spot at a distance, somewhat remote from the male part of the community. Then, for a couple of hours, you may put down your glass while we give ourselves up to sweet slumbers, first, however, observing me enjoying my privilege, as the pet of the party, of lying on the best bit of green and pillowing my head upon whichever lap I please, a privilege which even the men of the party seem to think it quite right I should enjoy.

"We'll say now that it is one o'clock; my father has just started for town to attend an *eleven* o'clock rehearsal at Drury, and you, after inspecting the cold veal—the pale ghost of yesterday's fillet, and a small pan of shivering potatoes huddled together in a cold perspiration in a corner of a white plate, to see if an Irish stew or a mince may be produced from the remnants, and having prepared everything for the day's consumption, are just retired to your little boudoir to do a little bit of reading and writing. Then, after a look at the sketch of me by Lewis, you naturally wish for one more glance at your fairy glass, and see me quietly

seated alone in my little alcove in my Greek cottage, returned from the fields and occupied with my pen or pencil. You now begin to think the whole description almost too romantic to be true. You see a Greek gentleman in a most picturesque costume sitting on a settee under an elegant-shaped arcade, with a pipe in his mouth, as grave as can be desired, occupied in serious pursuits, with a beautiful boy of five years old standing at the table with a little white embroidered tunic, confined by a cunis or sash, a pair of stockings, something like those of Scotland, halfway up his little legs, a little pair of white sandals, and a scarlet cap with a feather in it carefully cocked on his little head, cutting bits of paper into moons and stars with a pair of English scissors. You don't know which to look at. You are in love with the child, and yet you cannot help looking at the gentleman. You can't be deceived. In spite of the dress, the moustachios, and the alcove, in spite of the smell of tobacco, you still discover the features you are in search of. You look over his shoulder and you see a letter addressed to his dearest beloved mother, and unthinkingly print a kiss upon the glass, which, sullied by the attempt, hides from you the image you were contemplating, and, as the steam which bathed it gradually clears off again, you fancy you see his eyes wet with the tears of true affection, which, glistening still for a moment, seem to indicate his grief at your deception. But you are not deceived, for, though you

cannot see them, believe me the tears are not a few which, in the midst of all his enjoyments, are sweetly shed at the thought of the affectionate regrets which are ever troubling the bosom of his mother. He sees her at all hours of the day; he sees his father soothing her sorrow, and comforting her with the picture of their son's happiness and well-doing, and reminding her of the unabating love for them both which accompanies him wherever he may be. Though dressed as a Greek, his heart is still English, and all his enjoyments in his enchanting abode are in reference to the delight of talking them over in his own darling cottage, calling to mind the warmth of a southern sun by the side of a coal fire, and finding a pleasure most exquisite in transferring the kisses of his Greek girls upon the beloved lips of his parents.

"But I have passed the boundary in the twinkling of an eye and find myself far away from Peroi and all its romance; the very thought of my own real home has destroyed in a moment the fairy spell of my enchantment, and my marble alcove seems to want a covering of thatch and a weathercock upon it. My little Spiridion looks up in my face as if he observed an expression upon it different from the one he is accustomed to, and for a moment leaves his moons and stars as if to be informed of the cause. Would that I could send the little angel flying to you with my letter, and with the power of conveying on his sweet little lips a portion of

the pleasure in description that he and I enjoy together. It is a happiness to look in his little innocent face, beaming with affection reflected there from my own. Not from my little innocent's face but from the fondness which it manifestly shows towards him. I have made a sketch of my pet, which, though it does not do him justice enough, will convey something of his air.

"But I find my journal, which I intended to have served for a week, has not even completed a day. My subject has made me quite too gracious, and is not half exhausted, so that your glass must be used another time to finish the picture. I will leave you now for awhile, as I would not have you take a glass too much; as it is, I fear when you get this large sheet, and have to pay its increased postage, you will fancy you see double, though I hope the pleasure of the draught will, in spite of its next day consequences, induce you to drink again. In the meantime I leave you; to-morrow I will finish the journal of to-day.

"C. J. M.

"Pola, July 27th, 1828.

"It is impossible for me, up to my eyes in packing as I am—D'Egville having left all the luggage on my shoulders—to sit down quietly to continue my description of Perol, which must serve for a future occasion. Suffice it to know that I have left it, and am in grand preparation for my voyage. I start to-night at ten

o'clock; the wind is propitious and two or three days will restore me to the land of sophistication.

"Capo D'Istria, July 30th.

"How vain are all the hopes and expectations of this life, as Mr. Grant has long ago tried to impress upon us from the pulpit. And yet, though we are thoroughly convinced of the truth of the observation, we cannot help fondly imagining that upon starting with a fair wind on a voyage of only a day and a half, that our arrival will be speedy in proportion to the favour of the breeze. On Sunday evening, at midnight, I left Pola, and for about a couple of hours we scudded along as famously as could be wished, when all of a sudden the wind ceased entirely, and in the morning—I having slept perfectly well upon the thought that we were flying towards Venice—I found myself still within sight of the Bay of Pola. My chagrin was great, and gradually increased into despair upon the information being coolly given by the sailor, that there was no chance of any change for the better that day. However, I waited patiently, in the hopes of a night breeze which they assured me never failed, but which upon this occasion, by some accident or other, disappointed us, and another weary night I passed in my miserable cabin. Next morning, finding the chances were greatly in favour of our being still a day or two in the same predicament, I determined upon being put ashore and

continuing my journey on foot, or by means of any conveyance that might offer itself, and accordingly started, with a few things in my knapsack, in the heat of a midday sun, without the slightest hint at a breath of air, to the nearest village.

"There they had never even heard of a vehicle of any sort, and they might be Venetians from their total ignorance of the utility of horses. Luckily, however, my legs were not yet rendered gouty by the rich sauces and choice wines of Pola and Peroi, and I stepped out manfully till nine o'clock at night, when I was heartily glad to throw myself upon a comfortable bed at Pesino. This morning, having had a lift of fifteen miles in a cart, I continued my travels, and here I am, once more, at Capo D'Istria, heartily tired, and glad to retire to my not feathered but *straw'd* nest.

"Capo D'Istria, August 3rd.

"Here I am still, and still the vessel with my luggage not arrived; you may suppose how charming my stay has been here, my whole time passed upon the Mole, with a pipe in my hand and a book in my mouth, that is, *vice versâ*. I have been engaged on the look-out service, and, from this sample of its pleasures, have no desire whatever to continue the profession. Yesterday, my patience being worn out, I made an excursion to see a famous cavern, fifteen miles off, and spent rather an agreeable day in the country. Heaven

knows when I shall leave this place, though something like a favouring breeze seems to flatter me with the hope that my crew *must* arrive to-morrow. If not, I shall certainly start, if I walk all the way. I am in much too great a fidget to write at length, and particularly as the exhibition at Venice opens, most provokingly, *to-day*. By a most wise and accidental forethought of mine, I gave my drawings to D'Egville to take with him, in case (little thinking it would so ruefully be verified) that I might be detained beyond the time. I am ready to jump into the sea from vexation at not being there at the opening, but I daresay 'all is for the best,' though I confess I am almost inclined to doubt the justice of the adage in this instance.

"Capo D'Istria, August 4th.

"Last night, at length, my lagging vessel arrived at about midnight; and, would you believe it, after all the warnings not to trust myself upon the salt sea ocean, I am persuaded to put my precious person on board again, believing their confident assertions that the wind must last. The alternative being a long land journey on foot, with a difference in distance of more than a hundred and fifty miles!! My knapsack, with a wardrobe like that of Mr. Dowlas, is already on board, and I am about to follow. This paper has followed me about most faithfully. I hope soon to

part from it, however, as I am tired of its company: Though I may be in want of a bed here and there on the road, I carry my own *sheets*.

"Venice! August 15th.

"Ah! thank heaven, at last, here I am, once more safely anchored; and a precious voyage I have had of it. I have nothing like time to describe it or to fill this gigantic sheet, for I would not lose this occasion of to-day's post to send off these tidings. Enough, that here I am. Your letters are in my possession, what the numbers are I don't quite know. All seems to be right at the exhibition, of which you will be informed instantly.

"C. J. M."

APPENDIX.

TRANSLATIONS OF FRENCH CORRESPONDENCE WITH COUNT D'ORSAY.

I. (p. 110). If you had had any knowledge of the world, you would have understood that it is indispensable to know one's place in it—that is a matter which, above all things, you ought to learn. You would avoid by so doing the trouble of being taught that the friendship which people have for you is no excuse for your taking a tone which it is necessary to lower, especially when you address a person who does not forget who he is. If you had taken a proper tone, you would have learnt that in conversation with milady before milord, we took occasion to remark that you had let slip the opportunity of making sketches at Capri, and further, that it was a pity you did not devote more time to drawing. If you find anything offensive in these words, I am at a loss as to their meaning, and as they were only uttered in conversation by milady to me, I was far from thinking they could annoy you. Further, and on another point, you have no right to assume an arrogant air and an unbecoming manner in reproaching me with what I said. You have placed me under the cruel necessity of putting you in your proper place, but you might have avoided it all if you had remembered to whom you were speaking.

II. (p. 111). I have slept and thought over your letter and the words with which you honoured me yesterday, and as it seems to me that neither nobility nor superior strength give you any right to insult me so grossly before ladies, and especially before servants, I hope you will not refuse me that satisfaction which I feel constrained to demand of you.

III. (p. 112). Your letter goes further to prove how little knowledge you have of the world. You should know that a letter ought not to be so flippantly ended, and as I hope that some good may come out of all this quarrel, profit by this piece of advice.

As to the satisfaction you desire, I will give you as much as you please. Name the place and the weapons; in fact, everything you think most fitting for your personal satisfaction. I return your letter, as its tone does not incline me to preserve it.

IV. (p. 117). I am very far from being sorry that Mr. Mathews has chosen you for his second, my only fear having been that he might choose somebody else. I am also far from being offended at any of your remarks. When I esteem anyone, his opinion is always welcome.

In principle the matter is, as you know, very simple. I was asked if Mathews had drawn anything at Capri. I replied no, but that he always carried his chalks and sketch-book to do nothing with, and that, with his great abilities, it was a pity it should be so. Lord Blessington had not sufficient courage to speak to him on the subject, without bringing in my name, and Mathews took the matter up with me in so lofty a tone, that I was obliged to bring him to reason, after explaining to him that my remarks had only been prompted by my interest in him. He continued in the same manner, and I then told him that the first time he took the same tone with me, I would throw him out of the carriage and break his head. I give you the quarrel word for word. The only difference I made between him and anyone else, was that I only said to him what I would actually have done to any other person who had treated me in the same manner. If I accompanied my threat with offensive and unbecoming language, I am sorry, for his sake as well as for my own; for I should be wanting in self-respect if I used unduly violent language.

As to your remark about the difference of rank, it is useless, for I never attach importance to rank which is so often compromised by so many fools. I judge people for what they are, without enquiring who their ancestors may have been, and if my superior had adopted the same tone of reproach as Mathews did, I would assuredly have done to him what I only said to Mathews, whom I love too much to degrade in his own eyes. I feel it would be ridiculous not to admit that I was wrong in using unnecessarily hard words, but at

the same time I do not wish to deny them—such for instance as my proposal to throw him out of the carriage. If Mathews wishes satisfaction, I will give him as much as he likes, acknowledging at the same time the goodwill he has shown in choosing you for his second. This affair is as disagreeable for you as it is for all of us, but at least it will not alter the friendship of your devoted

COMTE D'ORSAY.

V. (p. 159). It is useless for me to repeat how much we have regretted your absence, you can have no doubt of that. Let it be enough for you to know that there is a great void in your place which no one can fill.

Since your departure Naples has been pretty much the same, with the exception that the ardour of the curious has been somewhat calmed by the horrible occurrence at Pæstum. You will, no doubt, have seen in the papers that Mr. and Mrs. Hunt were assassinated there. It will soon be necessary to have an escort to go to Pompeii. It is only the artists who are safe from these attacks, for the brigands know they are armed *cap-à-pie*, penknives, compasses, &c. But notwithstanding these weapons, I am glad to see you have returned from Pæstum, for I had an impression that you were not very safe. At this moment there is in Naples the court painter of H.M. the King of Prussia, which is not saying much. But, notwithstanding, the man has arrived, swollen with pretension, and puffed up with presumption. The good Gell, protector-general of humbugs, has found himself under an obligation to take him up. He has introduced him to us, with his drawings. The man has passed two months in the interior of the museum at Portici and has copied all the paintings, and notwithstanding his great desire to spoil them, he found it impossible, for nothing is easier than to copy on tracing paper. Well, Gell is enthusiastic, he declares that he is a prophet who has come into this country to save the arts, while certainly, if the man had superior merit, he would have said: "Oh, nasty boy." You see that Sir Willy is always the same. The description of your journey has greatly amused us, and if I were to give you any advice for an imitation of a French préfet, it would be to do all the ridiculous things you could. You would be sure not to fail in the part. I forgot to tell you about Captain Smith, who is more stupid than ever if that

were possible. He has at present a heart-ache since I told him that his hair is of the best quality for making a cushion. Besides that, his legs trouble him when he remembers that you can run faster than he. It was only two days ago that he reminded me that you were the younger man, and that that was the only reason. Strangways has left for Smyrna, Baily is here, and will probably follow him; I suppose he will meet him in Turkey. In any case he will find his head over the gate of the seraglio of the Grand Signior, for in that country they cut off your head without much ceremony. We talk of you often, and think of you more often still, and if you are not ungrateful, you ought to do the same.

Adieu, my dear Charles, write to me, for I assure you that the friendship I bear for you is too sincere to allow it to pass away in silence.

VI. (p. 161). God bless our souls, my dear Matthias, S—— is gone, and is probably already on that Kentish road (of happy memory). His departure made us all sad—for a quarter of an hour—for he had seasoned his farewell with an abundance of tears, which he had kept in store for this happy circumstance. At last he is gone, with a bursting heart and full pockets. We all made him a present and I persuaded Lord Blessington to give him that unfortunate *cachet marin*, which Smith received with as much pleasure as if it had been the command of a second-class frigate. We all experience the sensations of an invalid who has just been relieved of a plaster.

I advise you to be more afraid of the stumbles of your gray mare (if she is still alive, and consequently if she still falls), than of those which you say you make in the French language. Your letter was too good for you not to go on, and you know how we love you, and that absence diminishes nothing. So from time to time send us an epistle in French. It will be well received.

I am sorry to be obliged to speak of a sad subject, but it is necessary for you to know that Elisabeth has just spoilt sweet Mary's red gown. From that moment civil war was declared, and it was only by sacrificing Elisabeth to take Vincenza back, that hostilities were stopped. You will see by this that Mary is better, now that there is a question of battles about red gowns, &c. I had forgotten to tell you that it is definitively known that Vincenza wears a wig; Mary had the proof of it in her hand in single combat. I give you

these little details in order that you may not forget our home life. Don't mention it to anyone, for sweet Mary would be very angry. Williams and Blayney seem to preserve their characteristic traits everywhere. I think that the latter looked at Punch to ascertain if he were more ridiculous than himself. I have received a letter from Millingen, who is puffing and blowing in Paris worse than ever, and I think his neighbours have made him move on account of his pulmonary puffing, for he has been obliged to go from the noise of Paris; where his asthma might be confounded with the carts which pass continually; to the Rue Neuve des Petits Champs, where he is lodging now. I am afraid the dear antiquary will not live long, especially when he learns that a conspiracy has been formed against him by a bold youth, who has appeared on the horizon to prove that all that James has written means nothing. You will guess, no doubt, that this man is a *protégé* of Gell, but notwithstanding, I think Millingen will come victoriously out of the Etruscan struggle. Although his calibre is small, his bullets will make larger breaches than the shells of others which explode with nothing inside them. However, if he dies, I shall have him reduced to ashes and put in our Etruscan lachrymatory. There is more room in it than he will want, and it is really a tomb worthy of a thin antiquary. I hope that you have not forgotten a "complimenter" (which means a French flatterer)—his name is Durand—whom you saw at Belvedere, very decided never to part with that which made his happiness, which consoled him for all his sins, and compensated him for all his troubles in the world—that is to say, his collection. Well, Mr. Durand, on arriving in Paris, finds that the most important thing he has to do is to sell it to the King of France, for a sum quite capable of consoling him for a loss so dear to his sad heart. So now he is a widower with his mind made up to marry mummies, for he is going to give himself up to that branch of instruction, or, I should say, of commerce.

B—— B—— and Co. have failed. Farewell medals, cigars, and other amenities of society! The Abbé loses by this failure 700 guineas, but he means to get them back some way or other. Medici will *viser* his passport, and Circelle will countersign it. P—— declares that it is a great comfort not to fail. In the first place he never had much idea of B——'s house, he thinks little of F——, and still less of Rothschild, but to make up for it he thinks a great deal of D——

and P——. At the present moment M. G—— is having some trousers made; probably on the model of mine; but it is a politic stroke to show the tailors of the city that his firm is all right. Although M—— never puts his foot inside the office, he has certified to me on the most sacred word of honour of a gentleman of Jersey and other places, that they have discovered in Pompeii things which we must go and see when this furious rush of strangers is calmed down—you will understand that it is useless to go to Pompeii to see all the partners of Day and Martin, and of Barclay Perkins. You have no idea of the appearance of the English who are now in Naples; they are really laughing-stocks. I assure you that if Baron Stültz of Clifford Street were to arrive now, he would cut a great figure among them.

I begin to see that I have just room to wish you plenty of instruction and pleasure in the office you are about to enter. Finally, my dear Charles, if you have all the good fortune which I wish you, you cannot fail to be happy. Lady B—— sends you a million friendly messages. Lord B—— is sneezing just now, otherwise he would, I am persuaded, send you at least 1,500 amiable things. As for Mary, she says all manner of things which I have no more space for. As for myself, I assure you of my unalterable friendship, and beg you to present my respects to your mother, and my compliments to your father. Lady B—— desires to be remembered to your mother, whom she loves with all her heart.

Adieu, and for ever your

Very devoted

D'Orsay

END OF VOL. I.

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